

Valley Takes Team Approach in Treating Atrial Fibrillation

When it comes to successfully treating atrial fibrillation (AFib), collaboration is proving to be more crucial than ever.

Atrial fibrillation, or an irregular heart-beat, can lead to blood clots and is associated with a higher incidence of stroke and heart failure. Today, more than 2.7 million people in the U.S. live with AFib, and that number is expected to double by 2050. Guidelines on the management of AFib released last summer by the European Society of Cardiology and the European Association for Cardio-Thoracic Surgery suggest that a comprehensive treatment approach may help curb this trend.

At Valley Hospital in Ridgewood, the Snyder Center for Comprehensive Atrial Fibrillation is delivering the type of patient-centered, integrative care outlined in these recommendations. At the Snyder Center, the emphasis is on overall health, not simply treating AFib. The goal is to identify health issues that are contributing to the patient's AFib – such as stress, hypertension, sleep apnea and obesity.

“At Valley we are excited to see that the integrative approach we practice aligns with the recommendations being laid out by clini-

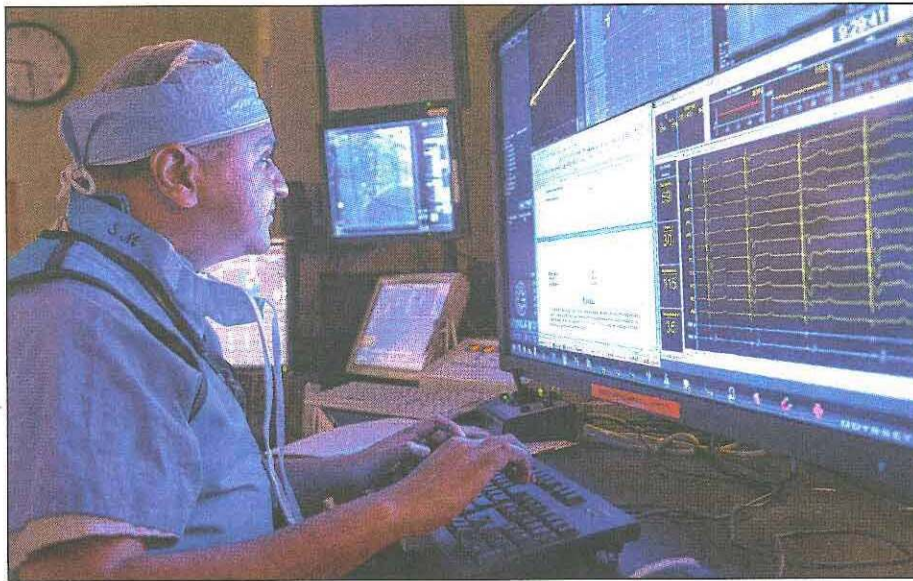


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Dr. Suneet Mittal emphasizes total patient management in treating atrial fibrillation.

cal organizations around the world,” says Suneet Mittal, M.D., director of Electrophysiology at Valley and medical director for the Snyder Center. “Our team believes in the

total patient management approach. Rather than focusing solely on ablation techniques as a treatment option, our team works with patients to ensure appropriate use of antico-

agulation medication and address other contributing health issues.”

At the Snyder Center, patients receive individualized care from a multispecialty team in a setting that emphasizes comprehensive patient evaluation and follow up. The team is comprised of electrophysiologists and specialists in imaging, cardiology, pulmonology, nutrition, diabetes education and stress management. Navigators and coordinators guide patients through the entire care continuum.

While there is no single “cause” of atrial fibrillation, it can be associated with high blood pressure, coronary artery disease, chronic lung disease, obesity, sleep apnea and other conditions. Some individuals don't notice any symptoms of AFib. Others feel palpitations or a galloping or sluggish heart-beat, shortness of breath, chest pain or discomfort, fatigue or weakness, dizziness, unexplained falls or fainting.

Treatment may include lifestyle measures, medications, implantable devices, cardioversion treatment, catheter ablation or surgery.

For more information on the Snyder Center for Comprehensive Atrial Fibrillation or to make an appointment, call 201-447-8392.