

- [Home](#)
- [SF STAT!](#)
- [Current Articles](#)
- [CURRENT ISSUE](#)
- [Online Newspapers](#)
- [WEEKLY NEWSLETTERS](#)
- [Media Kit](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Business Directory](#)
- [Video Interviews](#)
- [Contact](#)

Select Page

Time Means Muscle After Heart Attack

Every year about 935,000 Americans have a heart attack. Of these, 610,000 are first-time heart attacks. About 15 percent of people who have heart attacks will die from it. As the leading cardiac catheter and angioplasty provider in Broward County, Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute (MCVI) is working to lower that ratio.


One of the most significant advances in heart attack treatment, according to MCVI cardiac surgeons, has been the development of angioplasty and stenting, when a catheter with a balloon on its tip is passed into a blocked coronary artery.

After a heart attack caused by coronary artery disease, the


quicker an artery is opened, the more cardiac muscle is saved. The period from hospital arrival to angioplasty is called “door-to-balloon” or D2B time. The recommended standard for D2B time is less than 90 minutes.

Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute’s 24-hour Rapid Response Heart Attack Team averages 59 minutes from a patient’s hospital arrival to angioplasty – five minutes below the national average.

At the Institute, based in two locations at Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood and Memorial Hospital West in Pembroke Pines, the highly skilled cardiac surgical team is among the most innovative in Florida. The team specializes in heart valve repair, coronary artery repair and surgical treatment of atrial fibrillation.

When appropriate, the surgeons use minimally invasive procedures that can mean less pain, faster recovery and quicker return to  work and full activity. In 2012, they became one of the first sites in South Florida to perform Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) procedures – the groundbreaking minimally invasive therapy for patients with severe symptomatic native aortic valve stenosis who are too frail for open heart surgery.

“This procedure was unimaginable even 10 years ago,” said Michael Cortelli, M.D., Chief of Adult Cardiac Surgery at Memorial. “It is an example of technology that was originally developed to help the sickest patients who could not survive open heart surgery, but, as innovations continue, it will benefit healthier patients and inevitably influence the way we think about and perform cardiac surgery.”

 Drs. Cortelli and TAVR Heart Team surgical colleague Juan Plate, M.D., FACS, have recently expanded Memorial’s patient-focused, coordinated and comprehensive cardiac care to Aventura, with an office at 20801 Biscayne Boulevard.

Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute at Memorial Regional Hospital has maintained a three-star rating – the highest

category of quality – from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons in Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery (CABG) for five consecutive analysis periods between July 2009 and June 2012. In addition, Memorial achieved a three-star rating for Aortic Valve Replacement for the analysis periods during July 2009 to June 2012.

This recognition places Memorial's cardiac program in the top 6 percent in the nation for aortic valve replacement and in the top 14 percent in the nation for CABG.

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- [About](#)
- [CURRENT ISSUE](#)
- [Media Kit](#)
- [Video News](#)
- [Datebook](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Business Directory](#)
- [Webinars](#)
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