



Northeast Georgia Medical Center
HEART & VASCULAR SERVICES

NGMC is the First Hospital in the State to Provide New Heart Test to Improve Care & Reduce Cost

Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) is the first hospital in Georgia to provide a new test that can better predict if you have coronary artery disease and need a cardiac catheterization to restore blood flow to your heart.

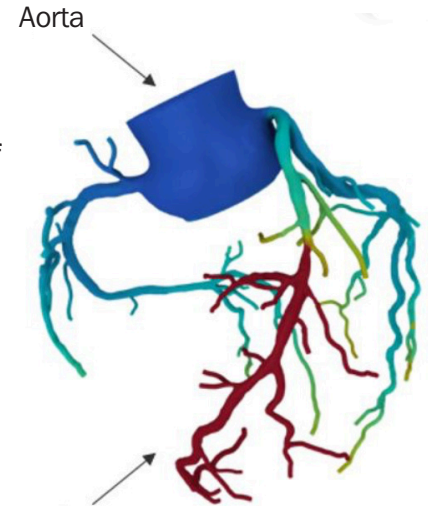
The new test - called HeartFlow Analysis - takes data from a CT scan of a patient's heart and uses it to create a 3D model of the coronary arteries. It then uses powerful computer algorithms to simulate blood flow and assess the impact of blockages on blood flow to the heart. NGMC's cardiac imaging team began performing the HeartFlow Analysis in April and has performed more than 60 tests to date - the most of any healthcare provider in the state. With Georgia's largest cardiac imaging team specially trained to utilize HeartFlow Analysis, NGMC performs the highest number of HeartFlow Analyses per month.

"Historically, most non-invasive tests are not very precise to assess for blockages and blood flow in the heart arteries - so patients often ended up having invasive cardiac catheterization just to determine if they needed a second procedure to put in a stent or perform angioplasty," said Ioannis Parastatidis, MD, PhD, noninvasive cardiologist at The Heart Center of NGMC. "This new analysis is a game-changer that helps us determine the right approach for each patient and avoid the physical and monetary cost of unnecessary procedures."

Nationally, HeartFlow Analysis has already been used for more than 30,000 patients with suspected heart disease.

Flow Chart

HeartFlow's deep learning algorithms build 3-D models of the blood vessels that feed the heart and use them to calculate whether narrowings obstruct blood flow and put patients at risk for heart attacks.



Colors correspond to amount of flow restriction.
Red: After a narrowing.
Blue: Less restricted.

You need a physician's referral for HeartFlow Analysis. Get started by requesting an appointment with a cardiologist at The Heart Center of NGMC by visiting heartngmc.org or calling 770-651-0917.

What is Mended Hearts?



Northeast Georgia Medical Center
RONNIE GREEN HEART CENTER

It is a nationwide support organization, for individuals with heart disease, including persons recovering from heart attacks, angioplasty or open-heart surgery. Members give hope and encouragement to others by providing living proof, that persons with heart disease can lead full, productive lives. Family and friends are also welcome to attend the free monthly meetings.

Before Grabbing a Grapefruit, Understand Its Power

Grapefruit looks sweet and friendly, but you might have heard it possesses powers far beyond those of ordinary produce.

Some of that reputation is fact, and some is myth.

Facts first: According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, half a medium grapefruit has only 41 calories and nearly half a day's recommended supply of vitamin C.

"In addition, it's a reasonable source of potassium," which is important for maintaining healthy blood pressure, said Karen Collins, a registered dietitian in western New York who specializes in cancer prevention and heart health.

Grapefruit also is laden with natural plant compounds called phytochemicals, specifically flavonoids, which studies show can help fight stroke and heart disease. Pink and red grapefruit are good sources of beta carotene (a source of vitamin A) and lycopene, an antioxidant "cousin" to beta carotene that has been linked to lower stroke risk. One cup of red or pink grapefruit sections has as much lycopene as a medium 4-ounce tomato.

That's all good. But grapefruit's reputation for interfering with some medications is well-deserved.

It particularly affects certain anti-cholesterol statin drugs, as well as some medicines used to treat high blood pressure, irregular heartbeats and even allergies. Grapefruit and grapefruit juice can cause too much or too little of a drug to stay in the body. Too much drug increases the risk of side effects; too little means the drug may not work as well.

"If you enjoy grapefruit or grapefruit juice and take such medications, there's no need to panic," Collins said. "But talk with your pharmacist or health care provider to clarify what's safe. They might be able to switch your prescription to something unaffected by grapefruit, or even advise you to simply watch the timing of when you eat it."

In the past, grapefruit has been the very symbol of a "diet" food. Here's where its reputation drifts into the realm of fable.

"The things that are not true are that grapefruit has some kind of magical power, or contains some kind of fat-burning enzyme, that you're going to eat it and burn calories while you're sleeping," Collins said. Studies have found grapefruit provides no special boost to weight loss.

Even so, grapefruit's tartness encourages people not to gulp it in a rush but to slow down, letting them feel full with relatively few calories, "and that is exactly an approach that research does support as the kind of eating pattern that helps people reach and maintain a healthy weight," Collins said.

The classic way to enjoy grapefruit – splitting it and eating with a spoon – is OK, she said. (Be sure to rinse it before you cut: Otherwise, the knife might push bacteria on the skin



through the entire fruit.)

But if you peel it like an orange and eat it by the section, you get added benefits from the membranes.

"Those membranes are rich in a type of dietary fiber called pectin, which is what we would call a viscous fiber," Collins said. "And that is the type of fiber that can help lower (bad) LDL cholesterol and seems to be what they call a prebiotic that helps to nurture the healthy bacteria in our gut."

For the best flavor, don't chill it.

"It's actually recommended that if you're going to be eating grapefruit within the week to just store it at room temperature," she said. It can keep for several weeks in the refrigerator, but it will taste better if you let it return to room temperature before serving.

She recommends trying it in a salsa, with chopped bell peppers and cilantro. "That adds a really nice, very crisp and refreshing kind of flavor like, say, on fish." She also thinks the sections work great on a green salad. "You can combine it with avocado, and that's kind of a classic."

And if you're in the habit of taking it with a sprinkling of salt or sugar?

First, she suggests, try it plain. "The grapefruit of today is really not necessarily the grapefruit of 30 years ago, and many of them don't have as bitter a taste."

"Although most Americans already consume too much sodium and sugar, a tiny sprinkle of salt on half a grapefruit or a bit of brown sugar on a slice you stick under the broiler is a drop in the bucket compared with other choices you could make," Collins said.

"If you're saying a quarter of a teaspoon of sugar makes it so you enjoy that grapefruit compared to a doughnut that has eight teaspoons of sugar in it, I would take the grapefruit."

Tips for Cutting Down on Sugar

Keeping tabs on how much sugar you're swallowing is an important part of a heart-healthy lifestyle, especially if you've been diagnosed with diabetes or prediabetes. The empty calories from added sugars in desserts, some drinks and candy can lead to weight gain and spikes in blood glucose levels.

The good news is that cutting down on sugar may be easier than you think.

Get started cutting down on sugar with these tips:

Toss the table sugar (white and brown), syrup, honey and molasses. Cut back on the amount of sugar added to things you eat or drink regularly like cereal, pancakes, coffee or tea. Try cutting the usual amount of sugar you add by half and wean down from there.

Swap out the soda. Water is best, but if you want something sweet to drink or are trying to lose weight, diet drinks can be a better choice than sugary drinks.

Eat fresh, frozen, dried or canned fruits. Choose fruit canned in water or natural juice. Avoid fruit canned in syrup, especially heavy syrup. Drain and rinse in a colander to remove excess syrup or juice.

Compare food labels and choose products with the lowest amounts of added sugars. Dairy and fruit products will contain some natural sugars. Added sugars can be identified in the ingredients list.

Add fruit. Instead of adding sugar to cereal or oatmeal, try fresh fruit (bananas, cherries or strawberries) or dried fruit (raisins, cranberries or apricots).

Cut the serving back. When baking cookies, brownies or cakes, cut the sugar called for in your recipe by one-third to one-half. Often you won't notice the difference.

Try extracts. Instead of adding sugar in recipes, use extracts like almond, vanilla, orange or lemon.

Replace it completely. Enhance foods with spices instead of sugar. Try ginger, allspice, cinnamon or nutmeg.

Substitute. Switch out sugar with unsweetened applesauce in recipes (use equal amounts).

Limit Non-nutritive Sweeteners. If you are trying to lose weight, a temporary fix to satisfying your sweet tooth may be with non-nutritive sweeteners. But watch out! Make sure that swapping sugary options for non-nutritive sweeteners now doesn't lead to eating more later.

Sweet and Savory Heart-Healthy Snack Mix

All trail mix is not created equal. Sometimes, sugar and fat can ruin what seems like a healthy snack option. A handful of this crunchy mix is perfect for the mid-afternoon munchies, or bring along the whole bowl to movie night.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup unsalted, slivered almonds
- 3 cups whole-grain unsweetened cereal (such as Wheat Chex, Cheerios, shredded wheat or bran flakes)
- 1 cup unsalted, dry roasted soy nuts
- 1 cup unsalted, dry roasted peanuts
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup seedless raisins
- 1/2 cup diced dried apricots (or choice of additional dried fruit)

Directions:

Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl and serve!





The Heart Center of Northeast Georgia Medical Center Welcomes New Cardiologist

The Heart Center of Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) has a new cardiologist. **Santhi Adigopula, MD, FACC, FASE, FSCMR** joined the practice and is accepting patients at the Gainesville location.

“I am very proud to join this great team of experienced cardiologists who have excellent reputations for providing high-quality cardiovascular services in Northeast Georgia,” said Dr. Adigopula. “I am excited about providing comprehensive cardiovascular care for the people in our community.”

Dr. Adigopula received her medical degree from Guntur Medical College in Guntur, India, and completed her internal medicine residency and cardiology fellowship at Bridgeport Hospital/Yale University School of Medicine. Prior to coming to Northeast Georgia Medical Center, Dr. Adigopula was a non-invasive cardiologist/Medical Director

at Sentara Heart Hospital, Norfolk, Virginia.

Dr. Adigopula specializes in women’s heart health, valvular heart diseases, preventive cardiology, echocardiograms, exercise and nuclear stress tests, cardiac CTA, cardiac MRI, EKG’s, Holter and event monitors. She is board-certified in Cardiovascular Disease, Echocardiography, Nuclear Cardiology and Cardiovascular CT.

Learn more about Dr. Adigopula or make an appointment by visiting the website at heartngmc.org/adigopula or calling 770-691-5389.



The Heart Center of Northeast Georgia Medical Center Welcomes New Interventional Cardiologist

The Heart Center of Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) has a new interventional cardiologist. Raza Abbas, MD, MS, is now working in the cardiac catheter labs in both the Gainesville and Braselton locations. Dr. Abbas will join the experienced team of interventional cardiologists and advanced practitioners to provide a wide-array of minimally-invasive procedures, including everything from balloon angioplasty to stent placement.

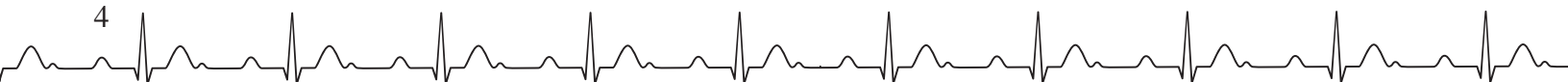
“I have always been passionate about providing exceptional cardiovascular care and everything about The Heart Center—the providers, the technology and the dedication to patients—aligned with my approach to care,” said Dr. Abbas. “I look forward to supporting the great work The Heart Center is already doing, and I am committed to making a positive difference in the lives of those we serve.”

Dr. Raza Abbas received his medical degree from Aga Khan University in Karachi,

Pakistan. He also obtained his Master of Science in Clinical Research Design and Statistical Analysis from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, MI. Dr. Abbas then went on to complete his residency in internal medicine at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, MI.

He then served as a Heart Failure Hospitalist at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, MI, before finishing fellowships in both cardiovascular medicine and interventional cardiology at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, WI.

Dr. Abbas is board-certified in Internal Medicine, Cardiovascular Disease, Echocardiography and Nuclear Cardiology.





RUSTIC ITALIAN TOMATO SOUP




Ingredients

Servings - 4

16 oz. frozen mixed bell pepper strips (may be labeled stir-fry mix)
 14.5 oz. canned, no-salt-added diced tomatoes, undrained
 1 3/4 cups fat-free, low-sodium chicken broth
 1/2 can no-salt-added navy beans (drained, rinsed)
 3 Tbsp. chopped, fresh basil
 2 Tbsp. chopped, fresh parsley
 1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
 1 medium garlic clove (minced)
 1/2 tsp. dried oregano (crumbled)
 1/8 to 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
 1 Tbsp. olive oil (extra virgin preferred)
 1/4 tsp. salt



Rustic Italian Tomato Soup

 Calories	 Protein	 Fiber
136 Per Serving	5g Per Serving	5g Per Serving

Directions

- In a food processor or blender, process the bell pepper strips, tomatoes with liquid, broth, beans, basil, parsley, vinegar, garlic, oregano, and red pepper flakes until slightly chunky or smooth.
- Pour into a large saucepan.
- Bring to a boil over high heat.
- Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes, or until the flavors are blended.
- Remove from the heat.
- Stir in the oil and salt.

New Drug Can Lower LDL

According to an article, which appeared in the Heart Advisor, a newsletter from the Cleveland Clinic, studies of a new drug, Inclisiran were presented at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions in November of 2019. This drug lowers LDL cholesterol levels further than statins by suppressing an enzyme that helps to determine how much cholesterol the liver eliminates from the body.

Researchers studied 1,561 patients with cardiovascular disease, who had already achieved a baseline LDL level of 105 deciliter on statins or ezetimibe. Half were given inclisiran and half a placebo by injection every 6 months. After 18 months, the patients given inclisiran had LDL levels that were 58% lower than those in the placebo group.

People with Heart Disease Benefit by Having a Dog

Dog owners with heart disease tend to live longer than heart patients without dogs. Researchers reported in *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes*

An analysis of 10 studies that included 340,000 adults found that dog owners had a 24% lower risk of dying during a 10-year study period than study participants who did not own a dog.

Among those who had experienced a heart attack, the risk of death was 65% lower. In another study that followed heart-attack and stroke patients for 12 years, dog owners were 20% less likely to die than those without a dog. The benefit of dog ownership was greatest among people who lived alone. Although the reasons were not identified, increased exercise and companionship are probably responsible.



Sleep After Heart Surgery

Many people complain of having trouble sleeping for some time after heart surgery. You may experience insomnia (an inability to sleep) because of:

- The affects of anesthesia
- Discomfort related to healing
- Changes in your daily routine
- Stress from personal concerns

If you cannot sleep following heart surgery, try these tips:

- If you have pain, take your pain medication about ½ hour before bedtime.
- Arrange the pillows so you can maintain a comfortable position and decrease muscle strain.
- Avoid napping too much during the day.
- Remember to balance activity with rest during recovery from open heart surgery.
- If you feel nervous or anxious, talk to your spouse, partner or a trusted friend. Get your troubles off your mind.
- Avoid caffeine in the evenings (such as chocolate, coffee, tea, and colas).
- Listen to relaxing music or a guided imagery audio program.
- Get in a comfortable position. Tense and relax muscles. Begin with your feet and work your way up to your shoulders.
- Ask your partner to give you a back rub.
- Take a relaxing shower.
- Get into a bedtime routine. Follow the same rituals to let your body know it is time to relax and get to sleep.

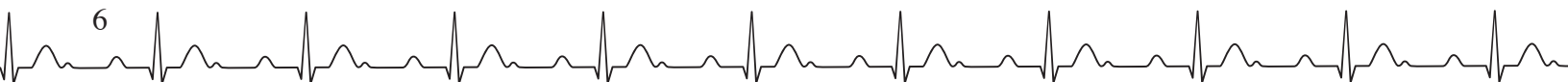
If these steps do not help you sleep, don't lose hope. Your normal sleep patterns will return within a few months following heart surgery. Call your doctor if:

- You notice a change in your behavior.
- A lack of sleep is causing problems in your life.
- Normal sleeping patterns do not return within two or three weeks.

Diet and Activity After Heart Surgery

For the first six to eight weeks after heart surgery:

- Gradually increase your activity. You may do light household chores, but do not stand in one place longer than 15 minutes.
- Do not lift objects greater than 20 pounds (your doctor may give you a different number if appropriate). Also, do not push or pull heavy objects.
- It is OK to perform activities above shoulder level, such as reaching for an object or brushing your hair. But, do not hold your arms above shoulder level for a long period of time.
- You may climb steps unless they have been restricted by your doctor. You may need to rest part of the way if you become tired. Do not climb up and down stairs several times during the day, especially when you first arrive home. It is better to plan activities to go downstairs in the morning and back upstairs when it is time for bed.
- Pace yourself - spread your activities throughout the day. If you become tired, rest and schedule unfinished activities for another time.
- Walk daily. Your doctor or cardiac rehabilitation specialist will give you guidelines for walking when you return home.
- Get a good night's sleep. If you feel tired, go to bed early. Be careful not to nap too much during the day or you may have difficulty sleeping at night.
- Check with your doctor to confirm activity guidelines.





Spotlight on Charlotte Emmett



Charlotte is no stranger to heart disease. Many members of her family have also dealt with heart disease. As a teenager, she was hospitalized with rheumatic fever symptoms and then as a young adult she was diagnosed with a heart murmur. In 2014 Charlotte experienced an AFIB attack and after medication and various

procedures she had a pacemaker implanted in 2015. It was during this time in the hospital that she recalls a visit from a man wearing a red volunteer jacket.

After being discharged from NGHS Charlotte inquired about joining the local Mended Hearts chapter. She joined after attending her first meeting. She knew there was real value in being part of a support group for people with heart problems. As she attended the monthly meetings, she discovered that in addition to the peer support she also learned a great deal from the presentations by cardiologists, nurses, dietician, cardiac rehab staff and others. Through all of this she has learned about heart care and lifestyle changes and the importance of not living in “heart disease denial.”

Charlotte was born in Albany, GA and upon graduating from high school planned to either enter medical or law

school. However, she ended up taking a different path and earned her M.Ed. degree and was employed by the Hall County Board of Education for 37 years. She says, “I have volunteered in one area or another for as long as I can remember.” So, it was a natural fit for her to combine her love of volunteering with her experience as a heart patient. In late 2018 Charlotte began visiting heart patients as a Mended Hearts volunteer and she continues in that role today. She shared, “I am passionate about visiting heart patients at NGMC, Gainesville. Spending time with patients and their family members to offer them encouragement, support and hope is my absolute pleasure. I love being a part of the Mended Hearts Chapter 302 at Northeast Georgia Medical Center.”

As Charlotte continues to live with the challenges of heart disease, she has adopted a motto for herself- “I want to be the best I can be, for as long as I am.”

Mended Hearts Chapter President, Joe Lewandowski shared how grateful the chapter is for Charlotte’s dedication and commitment. In a little over a year she has volunteered almost 1,200 hours!

For more information on exploring volunteer opportunities with Northeast Georgia Medical Center, visit nghs.com/volunteer

Do You Really Need 3 Meals Per Day?

Most of us were raised to believe that it is necessary to eat three meals a day in order to be healthy. But recent discoveries, how our body produces and uses insulin, suggest that this might not be the best eating plan.

Current research is showing that there are many positive benefits when we fast, or restrict the time during which we eat, according to Cleveland Clinic dietician Julia Zumpano, RD, LD. “Fasting” means a set number of hours when no food is eaten. “Time- restricted eating” means you eat only within a certain window of time.

When you eat or fast depends on your lifestyle and preference for eating breakfast when getting up, or waiting until you get hungry. It is recommended trying it three days a week to see if it works for you.

This new eating pattern works for two reasons: “When we eat nothing and drink only water, tea on black coffee, our insulin levels, blood sugar levels and inflammation tend to drop”, according to Zumpano. “We may eat less and consume fewer calories, which can also help with weight loss.”

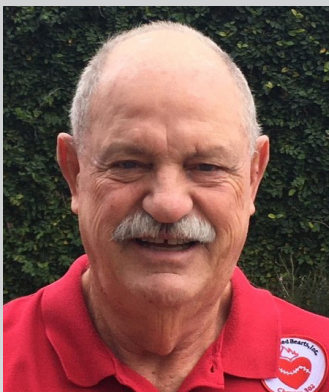
Studies have shown that eating a day’s amount of food

within an 8 to 10-hour window is ideal. For most people, this means having their first meal between 10 and 11 a.m., a snack around 1 to 2 p.m. and dinner by 6 p.m. If this schedule is not possible, follow these rules:

- Do not go longer than 4 to 5 hours without a meal or snack.
- Make your first meal the largest.
- Have a substantial snack (one that contains fiber and/or protein) 3 to 4 hours later.
- Make your last meal your lightest.

If you have diabetes, you should eat every four hours, because going too long without food can cause blood sugar levels to drop. Zumpano recommends eating meals with protein and fiber and avoiding foods that are high in sugar fat and salt. It is also recommended to discuss fasting with your doctor before you start. Your diabetes medications may need to be adjusted.

President's Corner



Joe Lewandowski

Thank you for taking the time to review our newsletter. Hopefully you found some interesting information to help you become heart healthy. We'd like to invite you to attend one of our monthly meetings. We meet on the third Thursday of the month in the Auxiliary Conference Room which is in the South Tower at 10:30 a.m., unless otherwise noted. We invite a health professional to talk about your heart and other health issues. If you would like to, there is also time to talk with other heart patients and caregivers concerning your heart problems. The meeting is followed by a light lunch. Everyone is welcome and we hope we can see many of you there.

2020 Meeting Schedule

All chapter meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month in the Auxiliary Conference Room, unless otherwise noted by *. Social time is 10:30 a.m., and the meeting begins at 11:00 a.m. A light lunch will be served following each meeting.

January 16* | February 20 | March 19 | April 16* | May 21 | June 18
July - no mtg. | August 20 | September 17 | October 15

*Braselton Educational Classroom

2019 - 2020 Officers

President:	Joe Lewandowski	770-823-6483
Vice-President:	Dale Katz	770-364-7409
Secretary:	Gertrud Rocco	678-617-0379

Visiting Chair:	Bill Swann	706-338-0686
-----------------	------------	--------------

Assistant Regional

Director:	Al Voss	874-757-1536
-----------	---------	--------------

Mended Hearts Office: 770-219-8932

