

HERO AT HEART

Dr. Iva Smolens



This year, 1.2 million Americans will have a heart attack. Half of them will die.

The truth is that heart disease is still the number one cause of death of adults in America — and in Michigan. But the heart doctors of Providence Heart Institute are working to change that. And that's why we salute this week's Hero At Heart.

Meet Dr. Iva Smolens, Cardiovascular Surgeon on staff at St. John Macomb Hospital in Warren.

Q: Dr. Smolens, when did you know you wanted to be a doctor?

A: From my earliest memories of childhood, I always remember saying that I wanted to be a doctor when I grew up. At first, I was emulating what my older brother was saying...but then it became clear that I really wanted to pursue my medical degree.

Q: What do you think are the challenges of practicing medicine?

A: There are always new technological advances being made and staying current is always a challenge. Additionally from the business perspective, the challenges with reimbursements, rising costs and malpractice can make it very difficult to practice medicine in certain areas. With all of these factors continually in play, it becomes even more important to remain focused on providing the best care for each patient.

Q: What makes a good patient/physician relationship?

A: Communication. The physician must feel comfortable freely expressing the necessary information to a patient and, in return, the patient must be able to approach their doctor with all their questions—not leaving until they understand the answers.

Q: What is some medical advice the world can't do without?

A: "Be a good consumer." It is important for a patient to investigate their physician and any proposed testing and technology they plan to administer. Patients should remember it is their body; therefore be educated, ask questions and act on your own behalf.

Q: Why did you choose St. John Health?

A: St. John provided me with an excellent opportunity in the Detroit area to practice cardiac surgery, offering everything I need to deliver first-rate heart care.

To find out your risk for heart disease, visit us online and take our 2-minute heart assessment at www.realmedicine.org/heartcheck

You can find Dr. Smolens at St. Clair Cardiovascular Surgeons, PC in Roseville and Farmington. If you would like to make an appointment, please call 888-440-REAL or visit us online at www.realmedicine.org.

Dr. Smolens is an independent physician on the medical staff at St. John Macomb Hospital.



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