

HERO AT HEART

Dr. Maged Rizk



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 St. John Macomb Hospital are working to change that. And that's why we salute this week's Hero At Heart.

*Meet **Dr. Maged Rizk**, Cardiologist on staff at St. John Macomb Hospital in Warren.*

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

A: When I was 8 years old. Family influence was a factor, but I was interested in becoming a doctor very early on. In High School I was fascinated with biology, and the ability to help people by curing disease attracted me to the profession. I became a cardiologist because heart disease is the greatest killer in the world, and I could make a difference every day—changing lives by providing a cure.

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

A: These days there are many. The biggest challenge with prevention comes with trying to educate the public about heart disease and the bad habits that attribute to its development. On the treatment side, the challenge lies in the ability to catch the condition in its early stages before a heart attack or stroke occurs. As for practicing medicine, the challenge is balancing the course of treatment with the fiscal responsibilities to both the insurance companies and the patients.

Q: What makes a good patient/physician relationship?

A: Trust...definitely. If the patient understands that, as their doctor, you are trying to help them, they are more likely to take the advice you give them, making treatment more effective. It is also

important for the doctor to empathize and take the time to really listen and let the patient know they are completely available to them.

Q: What's on the horizon in heart care?

A: There are many advances in heart care, but the key advantages of heart care today lie in the field of prevention. There has been so much progress in raising the public's awareness about managing the lifestyle risk factors associated with developing heart disease, such as proper diet and exercising. From a technical standpoint, advances in non-invasive diagnostic technology, such as improved CT scanners, 3D echocardiology and MRIs, have greatly improved how vascular disease is treated. Also, new procedures to treat carotid arteries, in the prevention of strokes, are the frontier in heart care today.

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

A: Follow your doctor's orders! Other than that, lead a healthy lifestyle and don't ignore any symptoms—even if they seem insignificant. A simple problem can become a complicated condition if ignored, so be proactive in maintaining your health because early detection is key.

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. Rizk at Cardiovascular Consultants, PC, in Warren and Sterling Heights. If you would like to make an appointment, please call 1-888-440-REAL or visit us online at www.realmedicine.org.

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



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