

HERO AT HEART

Dr. Mark Zainea



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 Hospital and Medical Center are working to change that. And that's why we salute this week's Hero At Heart.

Meet Dr. Mark Zainea, Cardiologist, at St. John Hospital and Medical Center in Detroit.

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

A: Early in my childhood. I was very ill as a child, and I was hospitalized at St. John Hospital many times in the first eight years of my life. I was even held back in grade school twice due to the nature of my rare problem. I remember the names of the doctors who helped me; Dr. Jewel and Dr. VonBerg. They performed and video taped my surgery—it was the first of its kind to be done in the United States back in the 60s. I fully recovered, but the impact of the experience led me to my interest in the challenge of medicine.

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

A: Medicine is so diverse these days...there are a lot of aspects to coordinate. Aspects of patient interaction and the coordination of efforts to provide complete, comprehensive care can serve as challenges. Add rapid scientific advancements and prescription medications and it's really the totality of what you deal with as a doctor in the field of medicine today. But these challenges are opportunities to constantly keep learning. The days of schooling followed by gaining experience where you peak around the eighth year of practicing are over.

Q: What makes a good patient/physician relationship?

A: Confidence and trust. The patient has to have the utmost confidence that their doctor has the knowledge and capability to provide the highest quality health care available and trust that their doctor has their absolute best interest in mind.

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

A: There are many emerging technologies in cardiology. The investment in developing these advancements has been dramatic. Patients who would have been turned down for treatment just a few years ago are now routinely receiving those treatments with a great success rate. Stents have had a major impact in this area. Multi-vessel stenting is being performed in patients of all ages, and they do incredibly well afterward. We are able to give them an extension of life. In the future, maybe five to ten years down the road, gene technology will be making the biggest impact.

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

A: Prevention! The greatest impact today is early detection and education about how to identify and modify the risk factors. These aspects hold the greatest defense. Interventional cardiology doesn't provide a cure. Procedures only treat the symptoms, not the disease. That is why primary preventative measures are key to steering clear of heart disease.

Q: Why did you choose St. John Health?

A: I was born and raised in the area—right at Outer Drive. I spent a lot of time here as a child with my illness. I remember the majestic entrance, and pediatrics was on the third floor back then. I also did my medical training at St. John, and I was the chief resident. Longevity has played an important role in the reason I came to St. John and the reason I have stayed with St. John for so many years—really decades.

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. Zainea in his office locations in Clinton Township or Roseville. If you would like to make an appointment, please call 1-888-440-REAL or visit us online at www.realmedicine.org.

Dr. Zainea is an independent physician on the medical staff at St. John Hospital and Medical Center.



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