

THE FACTS

(about Minimally Invasive Surgical Ablation)

Atrial Fibrillation (AF) may affect three of every four people over the course of a lifetime. Cardiovascular Surgeons at St. John Hospital and Medical Center are offering new hope for patients with this condition as the first in Southeast Michigan to offer Minimally Invasive Surgical Ablation.

Surgical Ablation -- an advanced, treatment for AF.

Minimally Invasive Surgical Ablation, it is unlike traditional heart surgery, in that it involves minimal invasion into the chest cavity and does not require stopping the heart or use of a heart-lung machine making it a safer and faster method of surgery for AF. As is the result with minimally invasive techniques, patients undergoing this procedure generally heal faster and return to daily activities more rapidly. Research suggests that this procedure is more effective than catheter ablation.

A key difference in the minimally invasive surgical ablation treatment is that the surgeon uses energy to form the scars or lesions on the outside of the heart muscle to stop the AF.

During the Minimally Invasive Surgical Ablation procedure:

- 1.** The surgeon will usually make small incisions called ports in the chest. Typically there will be six ports in total (1/2" to 3/4" in size). Using an endoscope, the surgeon is able to view the heart without having to open the chest cavity.
- 2.** The surgeon will then insert special instruments through the ports to perform the procedure, including the endoscope, small scissors and graspers. These tools will help the surgeon move the probe – a narrow, flexible device – into position.
- 3.** Using the Probe, the surgeon will then deliver targeted amounts of energy to the heart. This will create the lesions that will help improve the patient's condition and overall quality of life.

The entire procedure usually takes about three hours to complete. Most patients will be discharged from the hospital one to two days after the surgery. Although recovery time varies for each person, patients usually heal and return to normal activities within four weeks.

If you would like more information or a referral please call 313-343- 3732.



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