

Adult Congenital Heart Disease: Adult/Pediatric Cardiology Team Provides Comprehensive Care

By **Martin J. O'Riordan, MD, FACC**

Director, Adult Congenital Heart Disease Clinic at the Main Line Health Heart Center



Thanks to ongoing medical and surgical advances in pediatric cardiology during the past three decades, 85 percent of children who once faced death from congenital heart defects are now expected to reach adulthood. In fact, nearly one million adult Americans are living with congenital heart defects today.



As adults, many lead active, full lives, yet they face unique medical, psychological and social challenges. The Adult

Congenital Heart Disease Clinic at the Main Line Health Heart Center is among a handful of specialty care facilities nationwide to offer comprehensive treatment of adults with congenital heart defects.

Heart defects can occur when the heart or blood vessels do not develop normally before birth. Although most serious congenital

heart defects are detected in infancy, some are not discovered until adulthood. Many children with congenital heart defects have undergone surgery or have been followed closely by pediatric cardiologists throughout their lives. Eventually, however, they outgrow pediatric facilities and begin to encounter adult medical and psychosocial issues.

At our Adult Congenital Heart Disease Clinic we take a team approach to care, providing the collaborative expertise of our adult and pediatric cardiologists. Many of our patients not only have congenital heart defects, but also experience a host of other adult medical problems including lung, liver and peripheral artery disease. Some have diabetes, hypertension and lipid problems. As they age, adults with congenital heart defects will also face traditional acquired heart diseases such as coronary artery and valvular disease.

For this unique patient population, our adult cardiologists have the

special expertise and training in all aspects of adult cardiology care, while our pediatric cardiologists provide valuable input based on their familiarity with the patient's particular congenital heart defect. Perhaps what distinguishes us most is that we examine each patient as a physician team. Together, our medical staff provides a comprehensive evaluation and treatment that may include drug therapy, interventional procedures or surgery, and ongoing management of the patient.

Dr. O'Riordan is the director of the Adult Congenital Heart Disease Clinic at the Main Line Health Heart Center, where an adult/pediatric cardiology team provides the combined expertise to specifically address the unique needs of adults with congenital heart defects, an often underserved population. For more information, call 1-866-CALL-MLH.

Main Line Health

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The Main Line Health Heart Center is one of the largest, most experienced and comprehensive heart centers in the country. For more information, call **1-866-CALL-MLH**, or visit us online at **www.mainlinehealth.org/heart**.

Membership on the medical staff of Main Line Hospitals does not constitute an employment or agency relationship.

Main Line Health

Heart Center

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