

From the Heart

UPDATES FROM THE MINNEAPOLIS HEART INSTITUTE FOUNDATION®



SPRING 2020

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Take Care of Your Heart



Creating a world without heart and vascular disease

Dear Friends,

We hope you are all finding ways to brighten your days and thrive through this time of social distancing and difficult news reports.

At MHIF we find comfort and energy in science. Our staff and physician researchers are engaged in important research modeling, tracking and examining the connection between COVID-19 and cardiovascular health.

We also find comfort in the strong collaboration across countries and institutions to move research and education forward in rapid, innovative ways. It is humbling to see so many live out their professional passion during times of intense need. The spirit is inspiring!

In the midst of all this disruption life goes on. We wanted to give you a glimpse of what is happening at MHIF to continue to move the mission of improving cardiovascular health forward through innovative research and education. We hope you enjoy the updates and stories on the next pages.

Take good care of yourselves, friends and family.

Stay safe and healthy!



Kristine Fortman, PhD
Chief Executive Officer
Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation



Scott Sharkey, MD
President and Chief Medical Officer
Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation



“There are two ways you look at it — either in fear or you move forward and do something with it.”

— Kristen Bowlds, grateful patient (See her story on page 3)

KRISTEN BOWLDS

From SCAD Survivor to Passionate Advocate

Kristen Bowlds suffered a heart attack at the age of 29, shortly after giving birth to her second child. Despite a healthy lifestyle, she tragically experienced a second heart attack at the age of 32, and was diagnosed with Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection (SCAD). SCAD is different from a typical heart attack in that there is a spontaneous tear in an artery that is apparently healthy.

While Kristen has health challenges from SCAD, she hasn't let that hold her back. She channels her energy and passion into raising awareness about SCAD and women's heart health and has become a fantastic advocate for MHIF's work and movement to #ResearchHer.



"I worry every day I'm going to leave a beautiful family behind," said Kristen, "but there are two ways you look at it — either in fear or you move forward and do something with it. And so that's why I'm advocating and putting a lot of my effort into finding research and bringing more awareness to women's heart health."

Kristen has been busy sharing her inspiring story through interviews both locally and nationally and helping MHIF raise awareness about the need for women's heart disease research.

In November, Kristen and her husband Ryan appeared with cardiologist and MHIF researcher Dr. Retu Saxena on WCCO radio. They talked about SCAD and how women's heart health research is 35 years behind that of men's heart health research. In December, Kristen shared her story alongside her cardiologist and MHIF chief medical officer Dr. Scott Sharkey on KSTP 5 Eyewitness News.

Dr. Sharkey explained, "We know that SCAD happens to younger women, and we know they have fragile coronary arteries, but we don't know why they're fragile." He added, "We don't know why these patients have a risk of recurring, and we don't know if it's genetic and can be passed on to their children."

In February, Kristen traveled to New York City to share her inspiring story on The TODAY Show, and KARE 11 also ran a story in the Twin Cities. She has benefited from the research that has been done to date and she's found her passion in her fearless advocacy. Thank you, Kristen!

You can learn more about Kristen's story and watch her interviews on our website at mplsheart.org/Kristen

Creating a World Without Heart and Vascular Disease

At MHIF, 2020 is the 38th year of working toward our vision to create a world without heart and vascular disease. Over the decades, we're proud of the tremendous impact that heart and vascular disease research has had – and continues to have – on improving and saving lives locally, nationally and globally.

Why is research so important? Clinical research is crucial to the advancement of medical treatment. Every year, from prevention to treatment, exciting breakthroughs and new discoveries stem from MHIF research. Our research teams test new drugs, devices and innovative medical treatments to see if and how they work. Thanks to MHIF research, doctors can improve care for patients who have

coronary artery disease, heart attacks, unhealthy heart valves, heart failure, heart rhythm problems, genetic heart conditions, vascular disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, a family history of heart disease – and so much more. We also pursue prevention research to learn about treatments and lifestyle decisions that can prevent heart disease.

As we think about our ongoing commitment to having an impact, we also reflect on our sincere gratitude to all who make it possible:

Supportive, engaged patients:

At any time, more than 2,200 patients are actively participating in more than 200 MHIF clinical research studies. These patients are helping researchers find answers not just for their own care, but also options to save and improve the lives of so many others who have a similar condition.

GET INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

We welcome patients, family and medical professionals to get involved in our research.

- **By volunteering to participate in a research study, patients take a more active role in their own health care and may gain early access to new treatments and medications.**
- **In addition, by participating in a study, patients make a significant contribution to finding new and better ways to treat their heart condition and others with it.**
- **Benefits vary by research study and in most cases, it is not known if a procedure, drug or device may be beneficial.**

If you would like more information regarding participation in any of our research studies, call 612-863-3980, email us at research@mhif.org, or visit our website at mplsheart.org/featured-studies.



Passionate researchers:

Our MHIF research partners are the world-renowned physicians and their teams from the Minneapolis Heart Institute®, who were recently recognized as the #14 cardiology center in the U.S. by U.S. News & World Report. These physicians — along with highly experienced, caring nurses and talented research coordinators — support, engage in and make research possible for the benefit of patients everywhere.

Generous donors and supporters:

None of our important work would be possible without the support of many individuals and organizations who graciously donate their time, talent or financial donations to support our mission.

For more information, visit mplsheart.org/donate.

“I pinch myself every day I come into work. I pinch myself looking at what the foundation has added to the world. We continue to advance science at a faster and faster pace every year. We’ve attracted such great researchers and they’ve done such great work to help patients. So every day in my practice I utilize things now taking care of patients that the foundation discovered and brought forward to me and others throughout the years.”

— Dr. William Katsiyannis, electrophysiologist, president of Minneapolis Heart Institute®



LOOKING AHEAD

Hope, Health & Humor | August 2020

Planning for MHIF’s fifth annual Hope, Health & Humor women’s event is underway. Each year we look forward to hosting this event to focus on hope and discovery for women’s heart health and to celebrate our commitment to #ResearchHer. This year’s event may look a bit different—more details coming soon!

MHIF Annual Celebration | Saturday, October 10, 2020

Visit our website at mplsheart.org to watch for more information on these events and more!

Focus on Gratitude

Did you know that gratitude has been shown to improve both your physical and psychological health, help you sleep better, improve your self-esteem, increase your mental strength and more? Focusing on gratitude is a great way to help manage stress, which is very important for good heart health!

Expressing gratitude is the act of being thankful, and showing your appreciation by returning kindness. By showing gratitude toward someone, or taking a moment to personally feel thankful, you're reliving a positive experience. Much like how stress can be contagious, gratitude can also spread through a home or workplace. Simple things, like a note of thanks to a co-worker, can have a tremendous impact on your personal and social wellbeing.

Strive to focus on being grateful and not dwelling on the negative moments with these ideas:

1. Start a gratitude journal. Research shows that a gratitude journal can increase your happiness and improve your overall health. We may still get angry, frustrated or feel sorry for ourselves at times, however, you may find that the more times you practice gratitude, the easier it may be to look at facing challenges with clarity. It's a step toward being mindful of the possibilities we each have and a chance to look for those positive things that are taking place around us.

2. Share something you appreciate with a friend, family member or co-worker at least once a day.

3. Incorporate gratitude into your stress management regimen. Next time you're experiencing an external stressor (e.g., traffic or long shopping lines), take a moment to think about something you've accomplished recently.

4. Practice "Three Good Things" to note the positives, not the negatives. All of us can be very quick to notice the negative in our everyday lives and often tend to not notice good and positive things. Make a habit of thinking about three good things at the same time each day (for example, you can do this as you get ready for bed). Ask yourself, "What are three things that went well today, and what was my role in making them happen?" For best results, write your thoughts down. Commit to making this a practice for at least two weeks.

Remember positive things can be big or small! A smile, a hug, holding the door for someone, sunshine, blue sky, warm weather, cozy nights, laughter, giving compliments – noticing or doing any of these things can help you to be more resilient and able to handle what life throws your way. Noticing and being grateful for the big and the small is a way you can find happiness each day.

"Three Good Things" adapted from Allina Health's Bounce Back Project™.
<https://www.bouncebackproject.org/3-good-things/>

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

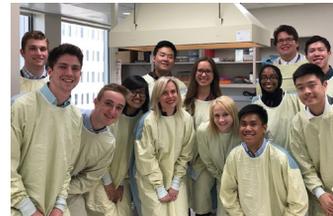
Our **2019 Cardiovascular Prevention Symposium** held in May educated physicians, advanced care providers and support staff on the updated ACC/AHA Guidelines on the Management of Blood Cholesterol on the identification and treatment of cardiovascular disease.

For 12 weeks over the summer, 10 undergraduate pre-med students in our **2019 Research Internship Program** got the exceptional opportunity to learn and explore cardiovascular medicine and be paired with an MHIF physician mentor to work on an investigator-initiated research project.

When it comes to heart disease, women are under-diagnosed, under-treated and under-studied. At our fourth annual **Hope, Health & Humor women's event** in August, we stressed that now is the time to understand and #ResearchHer! More than 200 women across the age spectrum – from their 20s and into their 80s – enjoyed an inspirational evening filled with a crafter's marketplace, delicious food and drink, and powerful messages of hope and health. Hold the date for our next event – Thursday, August 6, 2020.

In August, **MHIF's heart failure researchers, in partnership with the Abbott Northwestern Hospital Heart Transplant Program**, completed the first successful heart transplant with use of an investigational system that has the potential to preserve donor hearts longer by keeping them beating instead of simply storing them on ice in a cooler during transport as has been the traditional approach. Learn more at mplsheart.org/2019/10/08/mhif-researchers-help-save-lives-with-heart-in-a-box-clinical-trial

In September and October, researchers in **MHIF's Valve Science Center** enrolled the first patients in two pivotal clinical trials that are evaluating new treatment options for patients with severe tricuspid regurgitation (leaky tricuspid heart valve). Each year, MHIF successfully manages more than 200 studies across the spectrum of heart and vascular disease care with nearly 2,200 individual study participants.





Creating a world without heart and vascular disease

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