CORRIGAN WOMEN’S HEART HEALTH PROGRAM

Our Approach

The Corrigan Women’s Heart Health Program cares for women of all ages through prevention and early detection of heart disease.

The Corrigan Women’s Heart Health Program at Massachusetts General Hospital provides a unique clinical service — cardiac care designed specifically for women. Because there are differences in the way men and women experience heart disease, it is important to have specialists fluent in diagnosing and treating female patients.

This dedicated clinic focuses on all aspects of cardiology, from preventive approaches to complex conditions. Specialists meet with women of all adult ages to discuss their current condition or their risk for heart disease.

A Multidisciplinary Team

Once a patient enters the program, she is assigned to a cardiologist who will determine the resources needed to assist her with lifestyle changes to lower cardiovascular risks and stay healthy. Should a patient need surgery, a cardiac surgeon also becomes part of the team.

Specialists guide patients every step of the way to ensure they receive the best possible care. Patients are also directed to wellness programs both onsite and within their own communities. Such programs include:

- Nutrition counseling
- One-on-one exercise sessions
- Stress management and relaxation training
- Smoking cessation programs
- Other specialized cardiac programs within the Corrigan Minehan Heart Center

New Cardiovascular Disease and Pregnancy Service

Cardiologists specializing in women’s heart health, congenital heart disease, cardiomyopathy and performance athletics work closely with our maternal-fetal medicine specialists and anesthesiologists to guide patients through planning, pregnancy and delivery.

Our doctors and staff provide individualized care and treatment plans for patients before, during and after pregnancy, including:

- Patients with pre-existing heart conditions or disease
- Patients without history of heart disease who develop heart-related conditions during pregnancy, such as arrhythmias or heart failure
- Patients who develop pregnancy-related conditions that may increase risk of heart disease later in life, including preeclampsia, gestational diabetes and hypertension
- Patients who wish to continue advanced exercise training during pregnancy
At your first visit to the Corrigan Women’s Heart Health Program, physicians ask questions about personal and family medical history. Specialists then assess basic risk factors by checking:

- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol
- Blood sugar
- Body mass index (BMI)

If these initial tests show that a patient is at risk, physicians might schedule further testing. Additional tests include:

**Electrocardiogram (EKG)**

This test is an electrical tracing of the heart rhythm. Specialists perform an EKG to determine whether there is any evidence of a rhythm disturbance or prior heart attack.

**Exercise Electrocardiogram**

This test evaluates how a heart responds to the increased demands of exercise. It gives information about level of fitness and is a good screening test for coronary artery disease. This can be done alone or paired with an imaging test, such as nuclear scanning or echocardiography.

**Echocardiogram**

An echocardiogram is an ultrasound of the heart and provides a great deal of information about the function of the heart muscle and valves; it can show whether an individual has had a prior heart attack or heart changes caused by high blood pressure.

**Cardiac CT**

This test examines the coronary arteries and provides information about the calcium content of the coronary arteries and whether significant blockages are present in the arteries.

Specialists also perform cardiac catheterization with coronary angiography. This procedure examines possible coronary artery blockages and provides valuable information about pressures within the heart. If a coronary artery blockage is identified, treatment with a coronary stent (a tube that holds the artery open) can be performed at the same time.

Corrigan Women’s Heart Health Program rounds are held monthly and provide a forum for multidisciplinary discussion and cross-specialty case management of individual women referred to the program.

Request an appointment at the Corrigan Minehan Heart Center

Call the Massachusetts General Hospital Corrigan Minehan Heart Center outpatient access nurse at 866-644-8910