

Aortic Stenosis: A Common Diagnosis, An Innovative Fix

Beebe offers a minimally invasive fix for a narrowed heart valve.

By Dr. Mouhanad Freih, Interventional Cardiologist

If you regularly experience chest pain or tightness, shortness of breath, or dizziness, or if you have fainted during normal activities, you might have a heart condition known as aortic stenosis, or a narrowing of the aortic valve.

This may sound concerning, but there are many treatment options available right here in Sussex County.

Q: What is aortic stenosis?

A: Aortic stenosis is caused when the leaflets inside your heart valve thicken. These leaflets are responsible for the full opening and full closing of your heart valve as it pumps blood to the rest of your body. If the leaflets become stiff and thickened, it is more difficult for them to open and close. This makes your heart work harder to pump the blood, and because

the heart is working harder, you may experience symptoms of dizziness or shortness of breath.

This condition can affect anyone—from 35-year-olds to 80-year-olds.

Q: How is aortic stenosis diagnosed?

A: Aortic stenosis does not develop overnight in most cases. The diseased valve can develop over years depending on lifestyle.

This is why it is important to have a primary care provider, as this care team is usually the first to notice a symptom. Your provider can refer you to a cardiologist or let your cardiologist know of these symptoms.

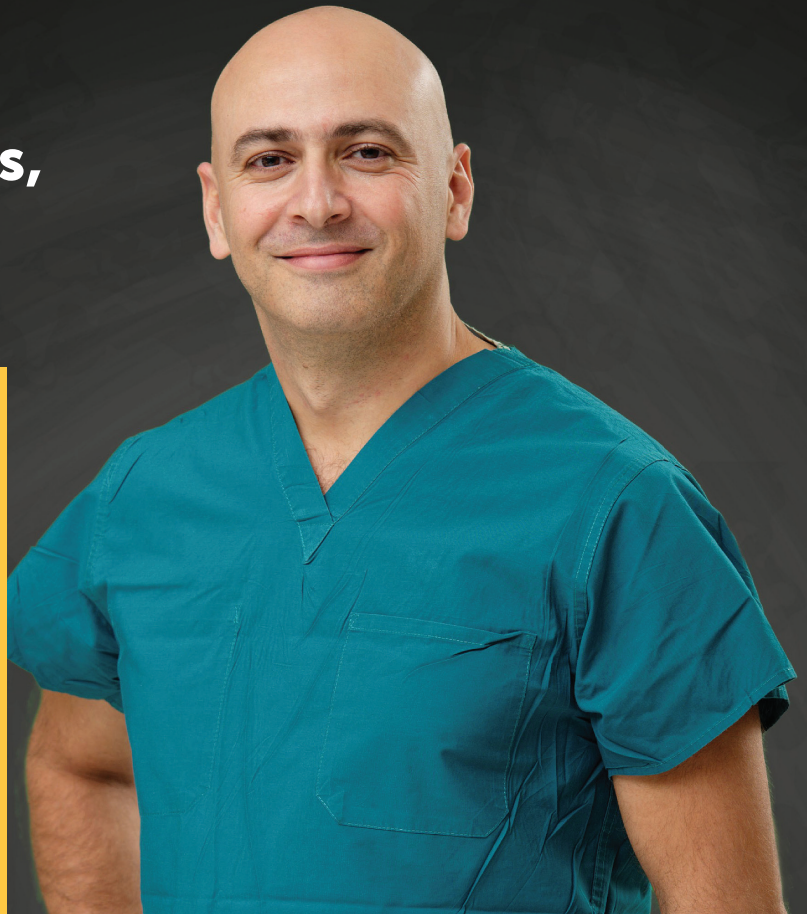
Q: How is aortic stenosis treated?

A: Mild aortic stenosis can be managed with medication and regular monitoring by your doctor. Lifestyle changes can

also help to manage or reduce symptoms.

For symptomatic or severe aortic stenosis, aortic valve replacement is usually required. Typically, this is done with open-heart surgery. It also requires the use of a heart-lung machine, known as a cardiopulmonary bypass machine.

Open-heart surgery is effective for many individuals with aortic stenosis.



Beebe Offers Innovative TAVR Procedure

At Beebe, we strive to provide the innovative technology, procedures, and surgeries that will benefit our community and improve your health. Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) is a minimally invasive alternative to open-heart surgery that may be an option for some patients.

TAVR procedures are done by interventional cardiology teams in the state-of-the-art hybrid operating room at Beebe's Margaret H. Rollins Lewes Campus. During the procedure, a device is inserted through a small incision either in the neck, groin, or a space between the ribs. A catheter threads the device to the heart where it is implanted in the faulty heart valve.

Beebe is also the first hospital in Delaware to use the Sentinel® device, an innovative device used during the TAVR procedure to capture debris that may be within the blood. This allows our team to prevent risk of stroke during the TAVR procedure.

In the past, patients with heart failure or heart valve issues might have had open-heart surgery, which takes months for recovery. With this innovative product and the advanced care provided here at Beebe, our patients can expect to start feeling better faster.

To learn more about the innovative procedures available at Beebe Healthcare, visit beebehealthcare.org/services/cardiovascular/interventional-cardiology.

Causes of Aortic Stenosis

- › Age
- › Calcium buildup
- › Radiation therapy
- › Infection of the heart
- › Failing aortic surgical valve

Symptoms of Aortic Stenosis

- › Chest pain
- › Shortness of breath
- › Lightheadedness
- › Dizziness
- › Fatigue
- › Trouble walking short distances

