

## Living Healthier, Longer

As Dayton's first—and only—lipidologist, Richard Saxen, M.D., offers state-of-the-art treatments for people with high cholesterol and metabolic syndrome as well as prevention plans for those at risk for these conditions.

**L**ipidology—what's that?

Richard Saxen, M.D., and his team at The Lipid Clinic at South Dayton Acute Care Consultants are used to the question. "Lipidology is an exciting new niche in the landscape of medicine," says Dr. Saxen, board-certified internist. "Lipids are fats in our bodies, including cholesterol and triglycerides. Abnormal lipid levels can lead to numerous chronic health problems like heart attacks, strokes, cirrhosis, or diabetes. Prevention is a key focus of our practice."

The clinic also focuses on metabolic syndrome which, he explains, is more of a description than a diagnosis. "These patients present with a number of different medical issues: problems with cholesterol or triglycerides, high blood pressure, abnormal blood sugar, or obesity," Dr. Saxen says. "Patients with these conditions are at risk for chronic diseases such as diabetes and fatty liver disease."

This sounds dire—fatty liver disease is now the second most common reason for a liver transplant—but with proper guidance, Dr. Saxen notes, there can be a clear plan to restored health.

### Cutting-Edge, Compassionate Medicine

Several innovative medications have recently emerged to tackle cholesterol-related disorders, and more are on the way. Metabolic research is also advancing, focusing on the role of novel nutritional strategies and different types of physical activity in addition to medication.

Dr. Saxen sees many patients who are overweight and are discouraged, feeling the common advice to simply eat less does not address their problem. "We're in an era where 'watch your diet and exercise more' has become almost meaningless advice," he says. "Our field has advanced to the point where we need to be providing very specific plans based on patients' individual needs and their response to treatment. Our clinic aims to do this in a dignified, respectful way that avoids blaming the patient. We discuss how the chemistry of their blood may be rigged against them. The calories they eat are being abnormally stored as fat instead of being burned as fuel."

To craft a plan tailored to their needs, Dr. Saxen develops a nuanced understanding of each patient's unique physiology, medical history, and genetics. "If you want to be a marathon runner, you need to train with a very specific plan tailored to your body and life," he explains. "Similarly, if your aim is improved metabolic health, you need a regimen specifically



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designed for you to meet your goals." In designing nutritional, exercise, and medication plans, Dr. Saxen considers patients' individual needs and physiology, including food preferences, culture, and day-to-day life. Over and over, he says, as patients lose weight or see their lipid levels normalize, they feel a sense of empowerment that spurs even further progress.

The Lipid Clinic at South Dayton Acute Care Consultants is a warm and caring environment, says Dr. Saxen. "My team and I aren't just your healthcare professionals; we're your allies. We partner with you to help reduce your risk of cardiovascular and metabolic diseases. Helping you live healthier for longer is our overarching focus."

