

A Collaborative Program of  
ABBOTT NORTHWESTERN HOSPITAL  
MINNEAPOLIS HEART INSTITUTE®  
MINNEAPOLIS HEART INSTITUTE FOUNDATION

# OPTIMIST PROGRAM

Alternatives for patients who believe they are beyond hope



# Welcome to the OPTIMIST Program

You have asked about or have  
been referred to the OPTIMIST  
(**OPT**ions In **M**yocardial **I**schemic  
**S**yndrom**E** **T**herapy) Program.



We serve patients with chronic symptoms of heart disease (chest pain, chest discomfort or shortness of breath) who are not helped by or cannot be treated with standard treatments. Our program provides alternative and new treatments that may include participating in research studies. This brochure and folder include information about our work and the treatment options that may be available to you.

To participate in our program, you will need to be evaluated in our OPTIMIST Clinic. This is a thorough cardiovascular evaluation. **This appointment lasts 60 to 90 minutes. It will be billed to your health insurance company.**

#### **BEFORE YOUR FIRST APPOINTMENT:**

- You should complete and mail to us the release of information forms and registration information form. These can be found in this folder. The forms allow us to obtain your medical records and set up the appointment.
- A nurse will review your records and call you. You can discuss questions about the program or the materials you have read and whether you want to make an appointment.
- An administrative assistant will call you to schedule your appointment and answer any other questions you may have.

By the end of your first appointment, our goal is to have a plan for your ongoing cardiology care. This includes determining if an alternative treatment program or research study may be right for you. Periodic follow-up visits to consider new options are common and are part of our service to you. These visits will be billed to your health insurance company.

The OPTIMIST Program and staff are dedicated to working with you to find the best answers for your health needs.

The OPTIMIST Program Team  
**612-863-3900 or 1-800-582-5175**

# Creating A World Without Heart Disease™

An elderly couple is walking hand-in-hand on a paved path in a park. The woman on the left is wearing a white sleeveless top and a dark skirt, and the man on the right is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and jeans. They are both smiling and laughing, looking at each other. The background shows lush green trees and a bright sky. The top of the image has an orange curved banner.

Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation researchers continually study, develop and track new techniques, medicines and medical devices to prevent, diagnose and treat cardiovascular disease. Advances in patient care are always on the horizon through finding new treatments or using existing treatments in new ways.

## About the OPTIMIST Program

For most people with heart disease, standard treatments like lifestyle changes, medicines, angioplasty and surgery help to resolve their heart problems. But for others, despite the best efforts of doctors and other caregivers, these approaches have not worked.

**For many of these people, there are no options and there is no hope.**

In the OPTIMIST Program, we believe in options. Our doctors, scientists and research nurse clinicians strive to offer people the prospect of a healthier, more satisfying life.

The program is designed for people who have chronic angina (chest pain), chest discomfort or shortness of breath. Our patients may have microvascular disease, severe blockages, left ventricular dysfunction or heart failure. These conditions affect their health and interfere with their quality of life. Standard treatments, like bypass surgery and angioplasty/stents, are either not possible or have not eased their symptoms.

At the Minneapolis Heart Institute<sup>®</sup>, with the support from the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation and medical industry leaders, we have developed new approaches to help people with heart disease. The OPTIMIST Program allows patients to receive new FDA-approved treatments. Patients may also participate in research studies that can lead to improved care.

OPTIMIST stands for **OPT**ions **I**n **M**ycocardial **I**schemic **S**yndrome **T**herapy. More than an acronym, OPTIMIST is a fitting name for a program and a philosophy that puts the patient's welfare at the center of our clinical research efforts. We are dedicated to improving people's lives by finding groundbreaking solutions to complex cardiovascular problems.

## Participating in the OPTIMIST Program

In most cases, patients are referred to the OPTIMIST Program by their primary care doctor or cardiologist. As a new patient, you will receive a complete cardiovascular evaluation in the OPTIMIST Clinic. This will help determine if a treatment program or a research study is right for you. You may also have follow-up visits at the clinic and opportunities to learn more about your condition and how to take care of yourself.

### OPTIMIST PROGRAM TREATMENT OPTIONS

We offer a variety of treatment options that can help patients with chronic angina, heart failure and coronary artery disease.

- **Angiogenesis**, the subject of groundbreaking heart research, uses gene therapy or adult stem cells to stimulate new blood vessel growth. This increases the blood supply to the heart. Improving blood flow and heart muscle function can relieve symptoms of coronary artery disease and heart failure. It can also reduce long-term risks of heart attack.
- **Enhanced external counterpulsation**, or EECPP, is an outpatient treatment that has been proven (is no longer a research trial) to decrease or even eliminate angina in patients who are not ideal candidates for bypass surgery or angioplasty. It uses large blood pressure-like cuffs wrapped around the legs and buttocks. The cuffs inflate and deflate with the heart rhythm. This opens new pathways around narrowed or blocked arteries. The goal of the EECPP treatment is to decrease or eliminate angina by increasing the blood supply to your heart.



- **Novel (new) drugs** are being developed to treat chronic chest pain. In recent studies, ranolazine (Ranexa) reduced the number of chest pain episodes and improved the quality of life for patients. Ranexa is now FDA-approved for patients with angina. Also, an amino acid, L-arginine, has been shown to relax the blood vessel walls and improve blood flow.
- **Spinal cord stimulation** uses a device that is implanted during surgery. It delivers mild electrical signals to nerves in the spinal cord. Electrical signals ease pain by interfering with the transmission of pain signals.
- **Transmyocardial laser revascularization (TMR)** is a medically approved technique that uses a laser probe to create channels through the heart muscle. This restores blood flow and oxygen to the heart. Since the 1960s, TMR has been used along with coronary bypass surgery for some patients to increase circulation to the heart muscle. TMR is now available using robotic technology that is less invasive than open surgery.

## NOVEL INTERVENTIONAL PROCEDURES

A number of interventional techniques are now available to increase blood flow to the heart.

- The Chronic Total Occlusion (CTO) Program focuses on patients whose arteries are completely closed. The arteries can't be treated with standard procedures like bypass surgery and angioplasty/stent, or the patients may not be well suited for these procedures. The program staff conduct research on and use new devices and techniques to open closed arteries. This helps to relieve symptoms, improve heart function, avoid future surgeries, and may even help patients live longer.
- The Coronary Sinus Reducer (CSR) is an hour-glass shaped expandable stent device. It is placed in the coronary sinus during an angiogram procedure. The coronary sinus is a collection of veins joined together to form a large vessel that collects blood from the heart muscle. It is believed that the investigational (still being researched) CSR will increase blood flow and reduce episodes of chest pain.
- Investigational low intensity shockwaves are delivered to areas of the heart that lack blood flow. This is believed to help new blood vessels grow and reduce the symptoms of patients with chronic angina.

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**INTEGRATIVE HEALTH** is a holistic approach to health care that advocates treating the whole person. It involves patients as empowered partners in their own health care. Integrative health focuses on prevention and wellness, activation of the body's natural healing capacity and development of self-care skills. Working with Abbott Northwestern's Penny George Institute for Health and Healing, Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation researchers are studying the impact of alternative healing therapies in treating cardiovascular disease.



## Dedicated Doctors and Research Staff

Having a condition that changes the way you live and think about the future can be challenging and sometimes frightening. OPTIMIST Program doctors and staff understand these challenges and are dedicated to working with you to find the best solution. Our doctors and staff are nationally recognized for their expertise and experience in cardiovascular disease and clinical research. We have included more information about our doctors in this folder.

## Benefits of the OPTIMIST Program Long-term Follow-up Study

More than 1,300 patients in our Long-term Follow-up Study help researchers understand the long-term prognosis of patients who have chronic chest pain despite medical treatment. As a participant, you may receive innovative treatment options, the potential of improved health and other important benefits, including:

- learning how to take a more active role in your health care
- having regular access to national leaders in cardiovascular health care throughout the treatment or study period
- ongoing education about complex heart disease, chest pain and cutting-edge treatment options
- periodic follow-up clinic visits that evaluate progress and could offer new leading-edge treatment options
- long-term follow-up throughout your lifetime at least once a year and sometimes more often
- gratification in knowing that you have contributed to advancing medical knowledge that may improve care in the future
- the annual OPTIMIST Program newsletter, which provides updates and information on the program's clinical studies, including studies that you may have participated in
- the annual OPTIMIST Day Celebration, where you'll meet other patients and learn about new therapies, upcoming research trials, current research findings and practical information on living with heart disease.





## Is a Clinical Research Trial Right for You?

Each year, exciting breakthroughs and discoveries advance medical knowledge. Clinical research helps to improve the health and lives of millions of people worldwide. At the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation, clinical research trials test these new drugs, devices or medical treatments in people to see if they are safe and if they work. Your first appointment at the OPTIMIST Program Clinic will include an opportunity to talk with a doctor about whether a clinical trial is right for you.

## WHAT HAPPENS IN A STUDY?

Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation researchers develop a study protocol. This outlines who may participate, what tests, procedures or medications they will get and how long the study will last. Researchers check participants' health, give instructions and carefully monitor participants during the study.

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Volunteers must meet certain criteria based on factors such as age, gender and health status. Participation in a research study is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time.

## QUESTIONS WORTH ASKING WHEN CONSIDERING PARTICIPATION IN A CLINICAL STUDY:

- What is the study trying to find out?
- Who put it together?
- Who is going to be in the study?
- Who will be in charge of my care?
- What exams, tests and treatments will I have?
- How long will the study last?
- How do the possible side effects, risks and benefits of the study treatment compare with my current treatment and other choices?
- How will I be protected from harm?
- Who will pay for the treatment and other expenses?
- How will my privacy be protected?

*Source: U.S Food and Drug Administration, Centers for Disease Control, National Institutes of Health*

## Leaders in Cardiovascular Care and Clinical Research



The **OPTIMIST Program** is a collaborative effort of three organizations, all known for their commitment to excellence in preventing and treating cardiovascular disease.

The **MINNEAPOLIS HEART INSTITUTE®** is recognized internationally as one of the world's leading providers of heart and vascular care. It combines the finest in personalized patient care with sophisticated technology in a unique, family-oriented environment. The Minneapolis Heart Institute®, in conjunction with Abbott Northwestern Hospital, addresses all heart and vascular needs: prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation.

**ABBOTT NORTHWESTERN HOSPITAL** is the largest hospital in the Twin Cities and is recognized nationally and locally for its exceptional expertise and care. Heart patients are cared for in a unique healing environment by internationally recognized cardiovascular experts. The hospital also offers education and prevention services, advanced imaging and diagnostic technologies, unique treatment approaches and groundbreaking surgical care.

The mission of the **MINNEAPOLIS HEART INSTITUTE FOUNDATION** is simple – to promote and improve cardiovascular health, quality of life and longevity for all. We exist to create a world without heart disease. This audacious goal is one that we accept and strive for every day. We pursue our mission on many fronts. Foremost is our focus on scientific innovation and clinical research. We also believe that education is a powerful tool that can help reduce mortality rates, improve cardiovascular health and quality of life.

The Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation was established in 1982 by a group of cardiologists from the Minneapolis Heart Institute® who recognized that the finest heart care for patients needed to be supported by an enduring commitment to education and research.





ABBOTT  
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