

HEART MATTERS

for the residents of York, Simcoe & Muskoka



Left to right: Cardiac surgeons, Dr. Richard Bause and Dr. Byung Moon perform by-pass surgery in one of Southlake's new cardiovascular operating rooms.

CARDIAC SURGERY TEAM Makes Hearts Sing

Modern medical miracles are becoming so routine for the professionals at Southlake's Regional Cardiac Care Program that sometimes the most contentious issue in the cardiac surgery operating room is what music to play during the procedure.

"I will survive is popular," said cardiac surgery program medical director Dr. Byung Moon with a wry smile—characteristic of the easy going confidence displayed by the cardiac team, which performed Southlake's first heart surgery only 16 months ago.

As part of the new Regional Cardiac Care Program comprising percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) and the arrhythmia program, the cardiac surgery team now performs some 900 heart procedures per year.

Playful sarcasm aside, the surgical team lead by Dr. Moon is among the most highly skilled and best equipped in the business.

The contingent of three surgeons, three physician assists, three acute care nurse practitioners, three registered nurse first assists, six perfusionists, a team of anesthetists and nurses, a nurse educator, a cardiac care coordinator, and a support staff of varied specialists operates in a state-of-the-art facility.

The program has two dedicated cardiac surgery operating rooms, a 9-bed cardiovascular intensive care unit, and a 25-bed in-patient unit with 4 beds designated for high-risk patients.

The team performs several different heart procedures. The most common is coronary by-pass surgery. This involves grafting or attaching a vein or artery harvested from the patient's leg, arm, or inner chest wall to the aorta—the large vessel supplying blood to the heart—and by-passing or skipping over the area of the coronary artery that is blocked and grafting it to a healthier section. This enables the coronary artery to once again supply oxygen-enriched blood to the heart muscle.

The team also repairs heart valves and performs atrial or ventricular septal defect surgery—specialized surgeries to correct congenital defects in the upper or lower chambers of the heart.

As the regional cardiac centre, patients are referred from various hospitals in the province, including the nine hospitals in York Region, Simcoe County, and Muskoka. About 37 per cent of patients are from Simcoe, 36 per cent from York, and the rest from surrounding regions, including Muskoka.

Whether patients have heart valve, or coronary artery disease,

those who are waiting at home to have surgery are routinely referred to Southlake's pre-habilitation program. This unique program is designed to condition the patient both physically and emotionally for their surgery, which helps to contribute towards a faster recovery period.

"Typically, the surgery takes about three to five hours. In some cases, it takes much longer if the patient has a high degree of disease," Dr. Moon said. "On average, we do four procedures per day."

Endoscopic vein harvesting, pioneered by Dr. Moon, is a new and less invasive technique to remove the leg vein that is used for by-pass surgery. Innovations such as this result in shorter and less painful recovery for patients.

About half of all cardiac surgery patients are out of intensive care within a day and back at home within the week. Full recovery ranges from six to eight weeks.

"Our youngest patient is in the early 30s, our oldest is in the late 80s. Although cardiac surgery is not a cure, it is a long-term solution that greatly improves the patient's quality of life," Dr. Moon said. "Ten per cent of patients require re-intervention in the form of surgery or angioplasty within ten years."

"The hardest part for patients post-operatively is the lifestyle change. They must be aware of the need to exercise, watch their weight, blood pressure and blood sugar levels, and stop smoking."

For this reason, post-surgery patients are automatically enrolled in Southlake's 26-week rehabilitation education and exercise program or in a similar program offered within their own community.

"Demand for renowned cardiac services will grow," predicts Dr. Moon. "We're a relatively new program and we were up to full capacity last November. At the moment, we're maintaining the program well. The region is one of the fastest growing in Canada. Statistically, each year, one in every 1,000 people will need cardiac surgery. As the population grows, so will the demand."

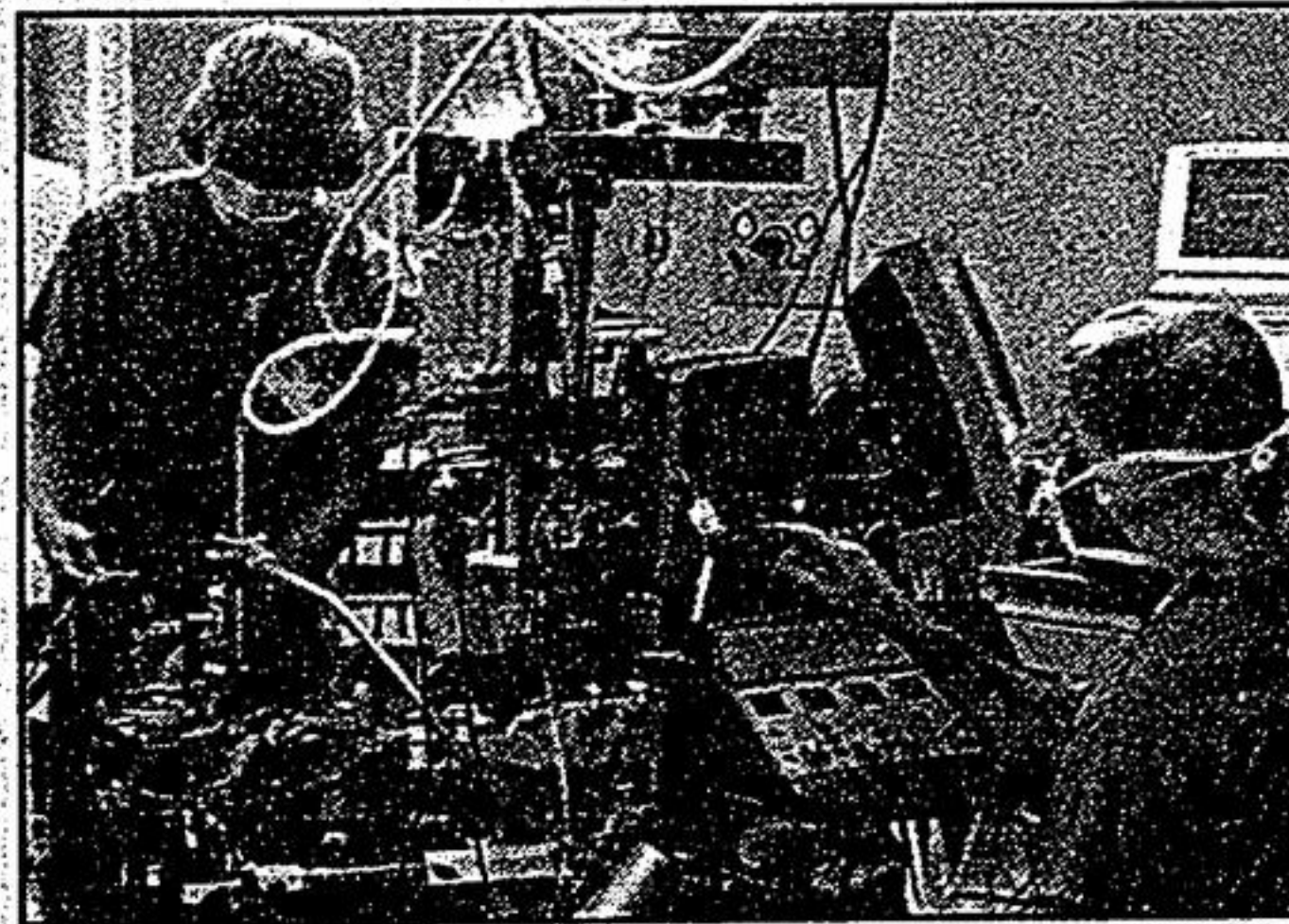
The team is geared for these challenges. "Ours is a whole team approach," said cardiac care program director Janis Klein. "We couldn't do it without everyone on board."

Perfusion services manager Paul Murphy and his six-member team are also an integral part of Southlake's cardiac surgery program. Perfusionists are highly trained professionals, who are responsible for operating the heart-lung machine—the equipment that replicates the natural function of the heart and lungs—while the heart is stopped during cardiac surgery.

"It's an interesting job," Mr. Murphy attests. "Each case is different. What we achieve here is a nice combination of technology and artistry and the results are gratifying."

Dr. Moon is convinced the cardiac care unit will continue to uphold its well-deserved reputation as the finest in the field.

"Our greatest strength is our personnel, all of whom are highly skilled and enthusiastic," Dr. Moon said. "We function like a well-tuned orchestra. Everyone knows what part they play, when they need to play it, and how each member of the team is needed to complete the score. The applause we receive for saving or improving the quality of someone's life tells us that our work is indeed appreciated."



During by-pass surgery, the heart-lung machine replicates the natural function of the heart and lungs while the patient's heart is stopped.

A New Era In Cardiovascular Care

4th Annual Conference Hosted by Southlake's Regional Cardiac Care Program April 23, 2005 The Kingbridge Centre, King City

An interactive one-day event focusing on the latest clinical techniques and practices in cardiac care.

Who Should Attend

- Cardiologists
- General internists
- Family physicians

Conference Highlights

- Interventionalists will debate whether thrombolytic therapy is obsolete in 2005.
- Electrophysiologists will explore the cost effectiveness of cardiac resynchronization therapy and implantable defibrillators. An approach to appropriate patient selection will be offered.
- The cardiovascular surgery group will demonstrate the latest surgical techniques with intraoperative video. A practical discussion of post-operative complications will follow.

For more information and to register visit www.southlakeregional.org

This conference is accredited by the Canadian Cardiovascular Society



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