In the early 1990s, the Heart Center at Methodist Hospital was created and became the most preferred provider of heart services in South Texas. In November 2001, the Heart Center evolved into the Methodist Heart Hospital, a campus of Methodist Hospital. Located within Methodist Hospital, Methodist Heart Hospital offers the most comprehensive cardiology services in South Texas. Surveys consistently show our physicians, nurses and staff are the most respected in the region. Heart patients have full access to comprehensive care should the need arise. In 2008, the Methodist Heart Transplant program was moved to the Methodist Heart Hospital to better serve its patients by providing all specialty cardiac services under one roof.

For more than 40 years, Methodist Healthcare has been the leader in the treatment of heart disease and a pioneer of many firsts in cardiac care including:

- The first balloon angioplasty in the region in 1981
- The region’s first human heart valve transplant in 1986
- The first beating-heart bypass procedure shown live on national TV and on the web

The Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Program at Methodist Healthcare was established in 1986 as the first approved Medicare - Medicaid program in South Texas. Today, it is the largest heart transplant program in Central and South Texas having performed over 400 heart transplants and over 160 cardiac assist device implantations to date. The program includes a comprehensive advanced heart failure and pulmonary hypertension disease management clinic where medical therapy is optimized prior to determination if heart transplantation is indicated.

With more than 10 years of experience in using cardiac assist device therapy, Methodist Heart Hospital’s heart transplant program utilizes Thoratec, HeartMate and Abiomed devices to help patients survive while awaiting transplant. The assist devices also have been effective in helping patients’ hearts heal so they no longer need a transplant. The program is the only Medicare and Joint Commission approved center in the region for patients needing long-term cardiac assist device therapy.

Methodist Heart Hospital is the only hospital in the region that offers round-the-clock cardiologists “In the House.” When patients arrive at Methodist Heart Hospital and require cardiac care, they don’t have to wait for a member of the emergency room staff to page an on-call cardiologist. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, Methodist Hospital has two cardiologists in the hospital. In the event of a cardiac emergency, having the cardiologist ready on site can mean the difference between life or death. Nationally, the average time it takes between a patient’s arrival at the hospital to having a heart procedure is 90 minutes. At Methodist Hospital, the average is well under 60 minutes, in some cases only 30 minutes.

Methodist Heart Hospital features three cardiac catheterization labs, two electrophysiology labs, four dedicated cardiovascular operating suites, a 12-bed Cardiac Intensive Care Unit and a 14-bed Cardiac Surgical Intensive Care Unit, all equipped with the latest innovative technology. In addition, a cardiac catheterization holding area for patients allows for easy access to the cath labs and immediate post-procedure care.
Methodist Heart Hospital has a Cardiac Observation Unit for those patients experiencing possible heart-related problems. This six-bed unit can accommodate a patient for up to 23 hours while physicians wait for test results to make a diagnosis and treatment plan. This unit provides a calmer environment for the patient once they’ve been evaluated in the emergency department.

Every Methodist Heart Hospital staff member is fully trained in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) in addition to the basic CPR and cardiac life support training, raising the standard of patient care for our heart patients.

In 2012, Methodist Heart Hospital opened the region’s first private hospital-based Hybrid Operating Room. The Hybrid OR offers cardiology specialists and surgeons the opportunity to provide a wider range of services in a single room. From angioplasty and stent placements to coronary bypass, valve replacements and aortic repairs, the Cardiovascular Hybrid OR Suites at Methodist Heart Hospital offers the highest level of care from a team of cardiologists, cardiothoracic surgeons and vascular surgeons. This unique team approach brings together the best of cardiology and cardiovascular surgery by providing a diagnostic and operative environment with advanced technology. Both children and adults can be treated in the suite at Methodist Heart Hospital.

The Transitional Heart Failure Clinic, a department of Methodist Hospital, has helped heart failure patients get better and stay better, lowering the incidence of re-admission to the hospital. With this program, specialized “nurse navigators” identify patients who have experienced heart failure. These patients are now seen in the Transitional Heart Failure Outpatient Clinic within 72 hours of being discharged from the hospital. Either a nurse practitioner or a doctor sees the patient immediately, and then weekly for the first month after their hospital stay.

The South Texas Heart Valve Center, a department of Methodist Hospital, is the first and only hospital-based program in South Texas dedicated to heart valve patients. The program is constantly looking for new, more effective ways of treating valvular heart disease and has invested in new equipment and training to treat aortic stenosis by a procedure known as Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR). Methodist Heart Hospital is the only private hospital in the area performing the procedure. TAVR is among the least invasive types of heart valve surgery because the heart valve is replaced without having to open the chest cavity. Since it is much less stressful than open-heart valve replacement, it is an exciting new option for older patients who are not good candidates for the more invasive surgery. Benefits of the TAVR procedure include better quality of life for patients who previously had no options when a valve replacement was needed. The South Texas Heart Valve Center offers an interdisciplinary valve management team featuring an outstanding group of highly skilled health care professionals including interventional cardiologists, cardiovascular surgeons, vascular surgeons, neurologists, pulmonologists, radiologists, anesthesiologists and specially trained and experienced cardiac critical care nurses. The team collaborates with referring physicians to provide comprehensive care that includes thorough evaluations, imaging, treatment options and surgical excellence.

Methodist Heart Hospital features an Early Heart Attack Care Program, offering access to an accredited Chest Pain Center in the Emergency Department. The Chest Pain Center provides diagnostic services that allow for rapid evaluation of patients experiencing heart attack symptoms. A group of emergency room physicians, nurses, cardiologists and technicians work as a team to establish a comprehensive management plan for patients with chest pain. Methodist Healthcare has been recognized for exceeding the national standards for rapid evaluation and treatment in emergency cardiac care - time from patient’s time of arrival to a completed angioplasty.

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