To learn more about TAVR, please contact:

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Cardiologists and cardiothoracic surgeons at Reading Hospital are using TAVR, a minimally invasive alternative to repair aortic valve disease (a narrowing of the heart’s aortic valve) for patients who cannot have traditional open-heart surgery.

**What is TAVR?**

Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) is a minimally invasive procedure that repairs the aortic valve without removing the old, damaged valve.

During the procedure, a replacement balloon-expandable heart valve is placed into the aortic valve’s place using a tube-based delivery system (catheter). TAVR is FDA approved for people with symptomatic aortic stenosis who are considered an intermediate or high-risk patient for standard valve replacement surgery. For that reason, most people who have TAVR often have other medical conditions that make them a better candidate for this type of procedure.

**What is involved in a TAVR procedure?**

Usually aortic valve replacement requires an open heart procedure with a “sternotomy”, in which the chest is surgically opened. TAVR can be performed through very small openings that leave all the chest bones in place using one of the following two approaches:

- **Transfemoral Approach:** The surgeon enters the body through the large artery in the groin (femoral artery); this approach does not require a surgical incision.

- **Transapical and the Trans-Aortic Approach:** During this minimally invasive surgical approach, the surgeon uses a small surgical incision in the chest and enters through a large artery in the chest or through the tip of the left ventricle (the apex).

**Where is TAVR performed and who performs this procedure?**

The procedure is performed in a hybrid operating room at Reading Hospital by a cardiologist and cardiothoracic surgeons. A Hybrid Operating Room merges minimally invasive and traditional surgical sciences with advanced imaging technology. This allows cardiologists to combine the traditional diagnostic functions of a cardiac catheterization lab or interventional radiology suite with the traditional surgical functions of an operating room in one location. Physicians use image guidance to evaluate, intervene and assess the results of minimally invasive procedures, complex minimally invasive procedures and open surgical cases. The Hybrid Operating Room gives patients and their doctors a less invasive approach to treating cardiac problems, which ultimately leads to improved outcomes and safer procedures.

**What are the benefits of TAVR?**

The benefits of using TAVR include:

- Shorter hospital stay
- Better quality of life
- Shorter recovery
- Improved blood circulation
- Reduced pain
- Fewer medical complications

**How long does the procedure last?**

The TAVR procedure takes one to two hours. You will stay in the hospital two to five days.