

ON THE FOREFRONT OF DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT, AND PREVENTION

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN AFFILIATE DELIVERS WORLD-CLASS HEALTHCARE WITH A COMPASSIONATE, PATIENT-CENTERED, AND COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH.

"Our philosophy has always been to treat patients as people—not commodities—and we are relentless in our efforts to provide the best patient experience," says Dr. Barbara Karenko, Interventional Cardiologist and part of Metro Health's heart and vascular team. "Our commitment in this area has been amplified by our affiliation with University of Michigan Health, a relationship that allows us to provide our community with access to some of the most advanced expertise available anywhere."

Leading-Edge Innovation and Technology

The goal for Dr. Karenko and her colleagues, ultimately, is the avoidance of heart- and vascular system-related incidents through regular checkups and preventative medicine. While that's not always possible, Metro Health's unparalleled expertise, cutting-edge technology, and innovative techniques and procedures are making a difference.

One area in particular where the healthcare system has made its mark is in peripheral vascular disease—clearing blockages, restoring circulation, and saving limbs. "Our experts literally save lives and limbs with Metro Health's amputation prevention program. We've received national attention for the program and have provided advanced amputation-prevention training to physicians from all over the world," says Dr. Karenko.

As an interventional cardiologist, Dr. Karenko also spends much of her time in the cath lab, functioning, she says, as "essentially a plumber for



Dr. Barbara Karenko,
Interventional
Cardiologist

the heart," clearing clogged arteries and improving blood flow. In particular, her team's use of the Impella[®] device to keep blood circulating when a patient's heart is in shock and not beating well contributes to many positive outcomes. Metro Health also has the only accredited Chest Pain Center in West Michigan and is recognized for its minimally invasive treatment of vascular disease, which typically manifests as vein issues in the legs.

"We're also changing patient lifestyles by promoting healthy eating, making exercise routine as opposed to a chore, and reducing repeat heart attacks through our intensive, comprehensive cardiac rehab center, responsible for the improved health of patients who have experienced heart failure and chest pain. The cardiac rehab program began in 2017, and since then we have treated more than double the number of patients we expected," Dr. Karenko explains.

"The bottom line is that patients from all over the country have turned to Metro Health—University of Michigan Health for our recognized expertise in clearing blockages, restoring circulation, saving limbs, and more. I am proud to be a physician and member of the team that provides these services."

BEATING HEART DISEASE

"The best piece of advice I have to offer regarding reducing your risk for heart disease is to be proactive," says Dr. Barbara Karenko.

"Quit smoking.

Exercise. Maintain a healthy weight. Get checkups regularly. And know your family history. Each of these actions—alone and in combination—can minimize risks."

There's an even greater impetus, Dr. Karenko says, to encourage women—who are much more likely to die than men from a heart attack—both to know and act on symptoms including the sudden onset of indigestion, shortness of breath, chest pressure, or increased fatigue. "As women, we're so used to being caregivers that we don't always recognize symptoms, or we minimize them, delaying a visit to the doctor until the situation is intolerable or until it's too late. I know it's easier said than done, but I encourage every woman to make their own health a priority."