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Cardiologist  
Dr. Mohamad Taha.

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BY **MATT COSENTINO**

PHOTOS BY  
**JODY ROBINSON**

# Follow Your Heart

**ROXBOROUGH MEMORIAL HOSPITAL CONTINUES TO ENHANCE ITS CARDIOLOGY SERVICES FOR AREA RESIDENTS, WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART TESTING AND TREATMENT METHODS, AND HIGHLY CAPABLE SPECIALISTS SUCH AS DR. MOHAMAD TAHA.**

**AN ASPIRING DOCTOR SINCE BEFORE HIS 10TH BIRTHDAY, Mohamad Taha, M.D., even had his preferred specialty narrowed down to something in the cardiac field by the time he was looking at medical schools. It wasn't until his fellowship a few years later that he knew for certain that interventional cardiology was his calling.**

During that time, he was once brought into the hospital in the middle of the night to help treat a patient suffering from severe cardiac arrest, and it took nearly an hour of defibrillation, compressions, and CPR to stop the arrhythmia. The team was able to stent the patient's blocked artery, and the patient miraculously went from being unlikely to survive the night to being just fine the next day.

"He woke up like nothing happened," Dr. Taha recalls. "With cardiac arrest that lasts for an hour or longer, the studies show that those patients are highly unlikely to recover, even if you do get the heart to continue to beat and the blood pressure to stabilize. The time that they had no oxygen to the brain is long enough that the patient never recovers neurologically. It was fascinating to me to see someone go from that to talking to me the next day, and coming in a week later in plain clothes.

"In cardiology, you get to see the results of your work and the effect it has," he continues. "This man started eating a healthy diet, stopped smoking, lost weight, and got

his blood pressure under control. It's a very satisfying and special field because you get to do both prevention and therapy, and you get to follow along with their progress."



Almost two decades into his career, Dr. Taha continues to have the same passion for cardiology. He is excited to see the changes taking place at Roxborough Memorial Hospital, which has been serving patients in Roxborough, Manayunk, East Falls, and Northeast Philadelphia since 1890. Since joining the hospital in 2021, Dr. Taha has helped oversee the expansion of Roxborough's continuum of care for cardiac patients, which includes inpatient, outpatient, and testing services.

For patients who have a family history

of heart disease, are experiencing minor symptoms, or just want to be proactive, the journey usually starts with counseling about the Mediterranean diet, healthy lifestyle choices, and regular exercise. Testing is also a key component of cardiology. Roxborough offers lipid panels, cholesterol panels, and screening for high blood pressure, along with markers of increased risk for cardiac disease that can be picked up even earlier, such as a calcium score, which is a noninvasive test to measure the amount of buildup in the coronary arteries.

"All of these are things to look at whether or not your body has already started depositing calcium or plaque in your arteries, or if it has a propensity to do it but hasn't started yet," Dr. Taha says. "Both of these conditions would have to be controlled at an earlier stage before symptoms present—before patients start having minor symptoms of shortness of breath or chest discomfort, or major symptoms of an episode that leads to acute myocardial infarction and hospitalization."

As for therapeutic options, Dr. Taha's team takes pride in providing low-risk access and using state-of-the-art technology in terms of catheters and the latest advanced support devices.

"If some patients are sicker than you would expect, then you can support their heart with an intra-aortic balloon pump, which is a device that sits in the aorta and assists in the pumping of heart by decreasing the work it has to do," Dr. Taha explains. "There's another device we offer called the Impella, and that's one that actually crosses and enters into your heart and assists the actual ventricle. It's like putting a mechanical motor inside your heart. We also offer state-of-the-art imaging modalities to guide the stenting process."

In the recent past, local patients had to travel to the large health systems in Center City to access this type of world-class care, often dealing with transportation issues along the way. Now they can easily come to Roxborough. Dr. Taha also sees patients at the Suburban Behavioral Health Campus in East Norriton.

"We're trying our best to offer services that keep patients in the community right here," he adds. "When patients find out they can walk just a few minutes from their apartment to see me, they really appreciate it. We are trying to get the word out that we are here and we are available to take care of your cardiac needs from A to Z." ■



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