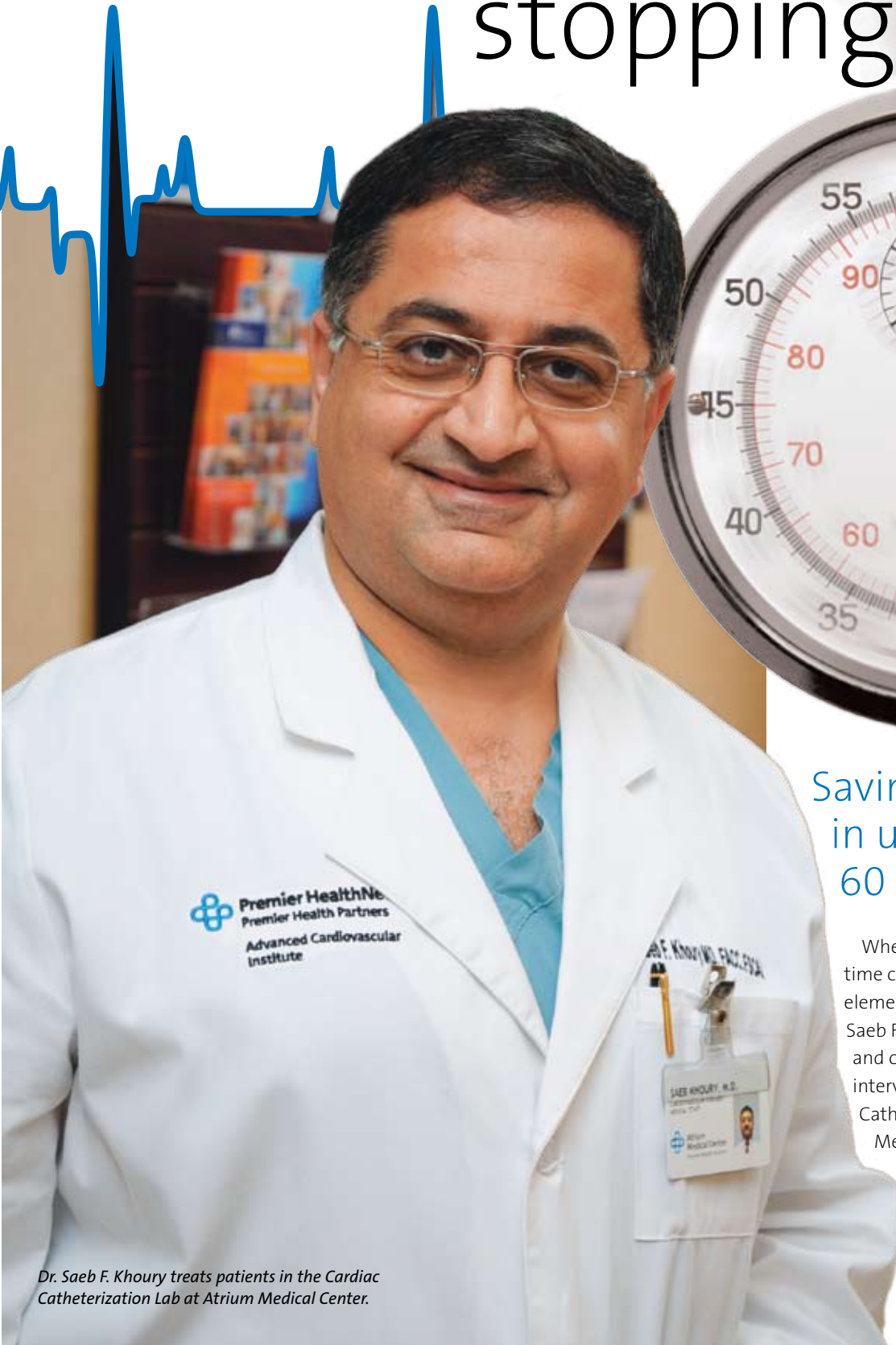


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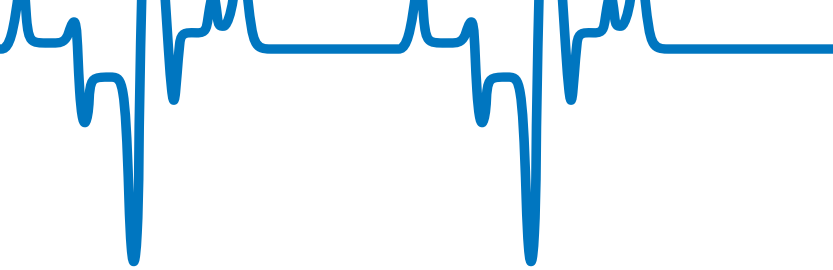
Saving a life in under 60 minutes

When treating a heart attack, time can be the most important element of a successful recovery. Saeb F. Khoury, MD, medical director and cardiac and peripheral interventionalist at the Cardiac Catheterization Lab at Atrium Medical Center, explains,

“Doctors have a saying, that for a patient experiencing a heart attack, ‘time is muscle.’ The shorter the time to open the vessel, the better heart muscle preservation we have.”

Dr. Saeb F. Khoury treats patients in the Cardiac Catheterization Lab at Atrium Medical Center.

clock



Quick Thinking

Time definitely made the difference between life and death for Richard Cassinari. On August 7, while driving on I-75 with his son Jacob, Cassinari started feeling very sick and thought he had better get to a hospital fast. He was right. Within minutes of arriving at Atrium's Emergency Trauma Center, Cassinari collapsed with a heart attack. "As the emergency team sprang into action, the team leader explained to my son, step by step, what was going on," Cassinari says. "Jacob stayed by my side, and they kept him informed during a highly stressful situation."

Dr. Khoury arrived quickly. Cassinari was taken to the catheterization lab immediately, where an angiogram showed that his left anterior descending artery was 100 percent blocked — he was near death. With well-coordinated efforts between the Emergency Trauma Center and the Cardiac Catheterization Lab, Dr. Khoury opened the blockage with a balloon and a stent, and installed an external balloon pump to keep Cassinari's heart beating. The team had him stabilized in less than 60 minutes.

Rapid Recovery

Within a day, the balloon pump was removed. Within two days, the breathing tube was removed. And on the third day after his emergency surgery, Cassinari was talking on the phone and working on his

computer. Dr. Khoury credits the diligence and teamwork of various departments within Atrium with getting Cassinari back on his feet so quickly. Less than a week had passed from the day he had an acute heart attack to the day he walked out of the hospital with his wife, Laura, and their four children.

Cassinari is back to work as a self-employed plumber, but his life was forever changed by his experience. He returned to Atrium with Laura to thank the nurses and staff at the Emergency Trauma Center and Cardiovascular Surgery Intensive Care Unit who put him on his fast track to recovery. "I couldn't have asked for better care," he says.

"Our patients often come back to thank us and tell us how happy they are to get back to the little joys of life, like walking with grandchildren or playing golf," says Dr. Khoury. "The best part of this for me was to see the smile on Mr. Cassinari's wife's face and the smiles of his children when they were able to see him back to normal. Ultimately, it's each changed life that matters."

»»Are you at risk for a heart attack?
Take our online risk assessment at AtriumMedCenter.org/heartrisk. Plus, see page 11 for information on our heart health screenings.

TIME = HEART MUSCLE

Heart muscle dies every moment spent without getting a blocked artery open. By offering interventional cardiology 24 hours a day, seven days a week, life-saving procedures can be performed immediately at Atrium, saving valuable time.

Interventional cardiology procedures involve catheterization (the insertion of a small tube called a catheter) to open or widen narrow or blocked blood vessels. They include:

BALLOON ANGIOPLASTY — A tiny balloon is placed inside a narrow or totally blocked blood vessel to open it and improve blood flow.

CORONARY STENTING — A small, wire mesh tube called a "stent" is placed inside a diseased coronary artery to hold it open.

PERIPHERAL STENTING — Similar to coronary stenting, this procedure widens blood vessels other than coronary arteries, most commonly the leg arteries.

Stents are wire tubes placed in arteries to keep them open. Some stents are coated with anti-clotting drugs.

