

Doctor pumps new services into hospital



Photos by Claudio Papapietro/New Jersey Herald

Vascular surgeon Dr. Mazen Itani, pictured in The Charles L. Tice Heart Center for Diagnostic Services lobby, recently joined the staff at Newton Memorial Hospital.

Newton Memorial has new vascular specialist

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NEWTON — There's a new face at Newton Memorial Hospital. Dr. Mazen Itani said he chose Newton Memorial Hospital for two reasons, because this area didn't have the type of services he is able to offer and in order to be close to family.

Previously living in Florida, Itani said his wife, Nadia, is from northern New Jersey and so they returned with son, Samir, 3, and daughter, Donya, 1½ to the area to be close to her family.

The addition of Dr. Itani brings a new service line to the Charles L. Tice Heart Center for Diagnostic Services, a cardiac suite known for its cardiac catheterization procedures, which detect heart disease.

While cardiac catheterizations diagnose blood flow problems within the arteries that surround the heart, vascular



Dr. Mazen Itani demonstrates the diagnostic equipment at the catherization laboratory in the Charles L. Tice Heart Center for Diagnostic Services at Newton Memorial Hospital.

catheterizations examine and treat diseases affecting the rest of the body.

Vascular disease can affect the arteries which pump blood into the heart and can lead to problems like leg pain, cramps, non-healing wounds,

kidney problems, stroke and aneurysms.

Dr. Itani is board certified in General and Vascular surgery, is a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Society, a Fellow of the American College of Surgery and a mem-

ber of the American College of Phlebology.

Licensed in New Jersey, Massachusetts and Florida, he holds a Doctor of Medicine degree from the American University of Beirut, residency in General Surgery at SUNY-Downstate in Brooklyn, N.Y., and a fellowship in vascular surgery at the University of Massachusetts in Worcester.

He practiced vascular surgery at the West Palm Beach VA hospital in Florida for three years before moving to New Jersey.

Dr. Itani said he deals with clogged arteries that can be caused by risk factors which include smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

These conditions can cause problems, he said, and the end spectrum is that tissue can die because of blood supply loss. Clogged arteries that can ultimately cause problems can be

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located in the arms, legs, kidneys and also the neck.

In his personal practice Dr. Itani said he deals with a lot of vein procedures that include varicose and painful veins in the legs. He said some of the procedures are cosmetic and some are considered functional, which means they cause pain and aching in the legs.

During a tour of the catheterization lab in the Tice Center, Itani described how the C-arm and fluoroscopy table are used for diagnosing and treating problems.

When a patient goes to the lab he or she is injected with dye and the state of the art equipment

allows doctors to take an X-ray of that patient's body to determine the origin of a blockage.

Problems that previously may have required bypass surgery have been supplanted by new interventions, Dr. Itani said. Clogged arteries are now treated with much less invasive procedures, such as stents and balloon angioplasty.

The new technology has "really revolutionized the way we've treated vascular problems," Dr. Itani said. "The success rate is as close, if not better than open surgery," he said.

To avoid problems, Dr. Itani recommends patients stop smoking, control blood pressure and cholesterol, take an aspirin every day, lose weight and exercise as much as they can.

Dr. Itani's private office is located at 179 High Street in Newton. For appointments call (908) 684-0004.