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Approaches and Incisions

Congenital heart defects can be repaired through a variety of incisions in the chest. Some operations require a lateral thoracotomy. Direct surgery within the heart usually requires a midline sternotomy incision. Our surgical team has considerable experience with all of the different approaches to the heart. The surgical incision and the approach to the chest cavity for each child is tailored to provide the optimal cosmetic result while maintaining the highest standards for the quality of the outcome and minimizing the risks to the patient.

Each patient and their family participate in a preoperative conference with members of the surgical team. At that conference, the anatomy and physiology of the congenital heart defect will be discussed in detail. The surgical approach to the congenital heart defect will also be discussed within the context of the appropriate type of incision for the safest repair.



Disclaimer: The information provided here is intended to educate the reader about certain medical conditions and certain possible treatment. It is not a substitute for examination, diagnosis, and medical care provided by a licensed and qualified health professional. If you believe you, your child, or someone you know, suffer from the conditions described herein, please see your health care provider immediately. Do not attempt to treat yourself, your child or anyone else without proper medical supervision.

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