

**OPEN YOUR EYES:  
WHEN IT COMES TO HEART HEALTH, IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS**

TUPELO, Miss.—Chuck Herrington was getting ready for bed one night two years ago when it happened.

“My left arm started hurting. It felt like someone was slamming it in a car door,” said the 49-year-old automobile sales consultant from Tupelo. “It was about 11 degrees outside that night in January but I was sweating profusely. I walked out to my truck and got two aspirins to take. The doctor says that probably saved my life.”

Herrington’s wife drove him to the Emergency Department at North Mississippi Medical Center, where he was met by cardiologist Murray Estes, M.D. In the cardiac catheterization lab cardiologist Roger Williams, M.D., detected three blocked blood vessels to his heart and implanted a stent to keep one of them open.

“The next morning a friend told me the preacher at my church had told the early morning congregation that I had a heart attack and they weren’t sure if I was going to make it,” said Herrington, who is a deacon at Harrisburg Baptist Church. “I called the nurse in to ask her, but she assured me I was doing fine.” Still, he watched the 11 a.m. broadcast in his Critical Care Unit room “just to be sure.”

During his hospital stay, Herrington was also diagnosed with diabetes and taught how to control it. “I suspected my blood sugar was high, but I never had it checked,” he said.

The massive heart attack served as a wake-up call for Herrington, who has since lost 100 pounds and finally has his blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol under control. He also quit smoking after 32 years. “The urge is still there,” he said, “but after you go through something like this, it curbs that craving a little bit.”

His goal is to lose a little more weight before his daughter’s summer wedding, not just to look better, but to feel better too. “When God gives you a second chance, don’t waste it,” he said.

Herrington hopes other men will learn from his experience. “Keep a check on your health,” he said. “‘Hear no evil, see no evil’ doesn’t work when it comes to your health. It doesn’t make the problem go away just because you don’t know about it.”

## **You Know Your Heart's in the Right Place**

NMMC's Heart Institute, located on the second and third floors of the East Tower, is home to four state-of-the-art cardiac catheterization labs, as well as labs for echocardiography, electrophysiology and nuclear studies. The Heart Institute offers advanced cardiac treatment procedures such as balloon dilation, stent implantation, pacemakers, atherectomy, valve replacement and open heart surgery.

The Heart Institute also offers cardiopulmonary rehabilitation services to help patients rebound physically and emotionally from cardiac and lung disease.

Pediatric cardiologists affiliated with Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center in Memphis see pediatric patients in Tupelo by physician referral. For more information on services available through the NMMC Heart Institute, call 1-800-THE DESK (1-800-843-3375).