

Dear Upstate Cardiology Patient,

First, we want to thank you for trusting us with your most valuable asset – your health.

It is our privilege and pleasure to be your continuing choice for the best in cardiology care. Every member of our staff at Upstate Cardiology takes this responsibility very seriously and works diligently to exceed your expectations for our practice.

At Upstate Cardiology, we greatly value open communication with our patients. One way for us to help make this happen is to regularly share new developments at our practice and provide valuable, timely information to make every visit you have with our physicians and care team as valuable as possible.

Welcome Dr. Richard N. Vest III

We are very happy to announce Dr. Richard Vest has joined our practice. Dr. Vest practices a subspecialty of cardiology called electrophysiology. He is formally trained to perform complex ablation procedures including Supraventricular Tachycardia Ablations, Ventricular Tachycardia Ablations and Atrial Fibrillation Ablations. With Dr. Vest's arrival we now have two electrophysiologists on our staff of 18 physicians. Dr. Vest joins Dr. Craig McCotter who has been with Upstate Cardiology since 2009 and who has built an arrhythmia center of excellence at Upstate that patients from across the country travel great distances to receive their care.

Bon Secours Medical Group

Our practice is now a member of the Bon Secours Medical Group. Bon Secours Medical Group is the new name for an extensive network of physicians and medical practices that have partnered with Bon Secours St. Francis Health System. You will begin to see this name associated with Upstate Cardiology in our advertising and in our office.

What does this mean to you?

What does this mean to you? Over the past several years, our physicians have worked intently with the Bon Secours St. Francis Health System staff to build a cardiovascular center that is ranked among the best in the Southeast for quality care and patient outcomes. St. Francis was recognized in 2010 by the Delta group as “Best Hospital in South Carolina for Cardiac Care.” For the second consecutive year, St. Francis was honored by the prestigious LeapFrog Medical Group as one of the best nationwide hospitals. This honor reflects that our physicians and staff have set the highest goals for patient safety, quality of care and operational efficiency – and their results are outstanding. There are many defining examples of the clinical transformation happening at St. Francis that were key to this recognition. One being St. Francis' commitment to 24-hour in-house coverage of the critical care areas by intensivists (board certified physicians who have specialized training in handling critically-ill patients). Another example is the St. Francis Cath Lab. The St. Francis Cath Lab is the first lab nationally

to receive accreditation from an external agency who conducted an on-site review to ensure strict compliance with numerous quality measures and standards. Additionally, the hospital has worked very hard to reduce the time it takes to get a patient who is in acute cardiac distress to the cath lab. The average time for St. Francis is 42 minutes compared to the national benchmark of 90 minutes. Finally, improvements can be traced to the full integration of electronic health records throughout the Bon Secours St. Francis Health System. This electronic record system helps prevent medical errors and provides real-time best practice alerts for the entire care team.

However, please note that while our preference is to use St. Francis when hospital care is needed, we will continue to honor your and your referring physician's choice of hospital. The one exception to this is for our patients who have implanted devices (pacemakers and defibrillators). If you are experiencing problems with your device and need to go to the emergency room please use the St. Francis Emergency Room. Our two electrophysiologists practice electrophysiology at St. Francis only.

What to do if you need hospital care ...

Emergency Department Care:

If you are in any facility for emergency cardiac care, **it is very important that you insist on notification of Upstate Cardiology for our cardiologist on call.** The medical personnel in the Emergency Department may want to contact a different cardiology group, but we ask that you insist on calling Upstate Cardiology. Our physicians will have immediate access to the complete medical information in your electronic medical record. Ready access to these records can help ensure that you get most appropriate care in the quickest time. **Please call our office immediately if hospital personnel do not honor your request for the Upstate Cardiologist on call. Ph. 235-7665.**

EMS transport:

Also, if you need to use EMS transport and you desire to receive your care at the St. Francis ER you should insist that the ambulance take you to St. Francis. The local EMS services out of habit take patients who are having a cardiac event to the GHS ER.

Greenville Office:

As most of you know, in June 2009 we moved our Greenville office from Grove Road to the Millennium campus. Patients and visitors alike have very positive comments about this new environment --it is easy to find, very spacious, and equipped with the most advanced diagnostic equipment available for nuclear cardiology and echocardiography. Free valet parking service is available Monday through Friday. Also within our building is the HealThy Self Center that has expanded hours and opportunities for all in the community to take advantage of the services, classes and facilities to improve their health and fitness. Next time you are in the office you should visit the center on the second floor.

We are very easy to find – take exit 48A off I-85 and travel 1.5 miles on Laurens Road toward Mauldin. Our office is at the second traffic light past I-85; at the corner of Laurens Road and Innovation Drive.

Easley office:

At the same time we moved to the Millennium Office we completed renovation of our Easley office. The Easley office now allows us to provide the same services in Easley as we provide in our Greenville office. So if you currently are traveling to Greenville for your cardiovascular care and Easley is more convenient for you, we will gladly schedule your next appointment in our Easley office.

Simpsonville office:

We do operate an office in Simpsonville for the convenience of those patients who live and work in the southern portion of the Upstate. The Simpsonville office is located on the Hillcrest Hospital campus in a medical office building that is on Hospital Drive which is only a few hundred feet from the Hillcrest Hospital ER. If the Simpsonville office is more convenient for you, please let our staff know you would prefer to receive your care in the Simpsonville office when you make your appointment.

Expanded Pacemaker/Defibrillator patient services:

With our two electrophysiologists we are now able to provide the full spectrum of cardiovascular care to include monitoring and maintaining implanted devices (pacemakers and ICD/Defibrillators). This enhancement to our services often allows patients who have either pacemakers or defibrillators to have their devices checked along with their follow-up visits with their cardiologist scheduled on the same day. If you currently have your device monitored by a different office and would like to take advantage of receiving all your cardiovascular care at Upstate, please complete the attached form that authorizes Upstate Cardiology to transfer your records from your current provider. Once we receive your records we will contact you to schedule your next device check, and if needed, schedule your next follow-up appointment with your physician on the same day.

Tips regarding your appointments / reminders

Regarding your care at Upstate, there are a couple of items that you can help us with. At the end of your scheduled appointment your physician may indicate that he or she would like to see you back in the office for a follow-up appointment. If that follow-up appointment is needed within six months, we will make your appointment before you leave the office. If your physician asks you to return in more than six months, we will send you a reminder card to call the office to make that appointment. If for some reason you do not receive that card, please call the office about a month prior to when your physician indicated you needed to return to schedule your visit.

Bring your medications to each office visit.

When you visit the office- for either a physician visit or any procedure--**please bring all the medicines and supplements that you are taking with you – including any vitamins and supplements that you may have purchased over-the-counter.** Many national studies have shown that a major source of health-related issues and even hospitalizations can be traced back to medications not being used as prescribed by their physician or from negative interactions resulting from other prescriptions or supplements purchased over-the-counter.

Bringing ALL your medicines will also help us ensure your prescriptions are up-to-date and that you have appropriate refills. It is much more convenient for you and for us to take care of all your refill requirements while you are in the office. We want you to avoid the \$15.00 charge that is necessary for phone refills.

UpstateCardiology.com – our new website:

We have recently created a new website that we invite you to visit.

UpstateCardiology.com - provides information regarding the care that we provide plus patient assistance, education and physician information that we believe you will find beneficial.

We truly appreciate that you have selected Upstate Cardiology. We very much want to do everything we can to ensure your visit is comfortable, safe and effective. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns regarding this letter or any aspect regarding your care and experience at Upstate Cardiology. I can be reached at 282-2073.

Sincerely,

Ronald E. Eskew
Practice Administrator