AFib Treatment Through Catheter-Based Ablations & Pulmonary Vein Isolation

If a patient's atrial fibrillation is not responding to less invasive treatment options such as medications or cardioversion, Dr. Laws can facilitate catheter based ablations such as radiofrequency, laser and cryo ablations. These procedures are used to physically block the undesirable chaotic rhythm when lifestyle changes and medications are not fixing AFib. Alternatively, the medications may be working to treat the AFib but a patient may have developed unwanted side effect or perhaps a person does not want to take medications on a daily basis. In these cases, if a patient is symptomatic with their atrial fibrillation a catheter based ablation is another option for treating atrial fibrillation.

CALCULATE YOUR RISK

During a catheter based ablation, flexible tubes called catheters are inserted into the large veins in the groin or upper thigh and are strategically maneuvered into the heart and the left atrium. The left atrium is the left upper chamber of the heart and is where atrial fibrillation originates. During the early stages of AFib, the areas within the pulmonary veins, where they attach to the left atrium, are the primary source for the abnormal electrical impulses. Advanced imaging in our hybrid catheterization laboratory-operating room allows Dr. Laws to create an electrical map of the heart and identify the AFib energy sources. Once the sources are identified, radiofrequency energy, cryo (freezing) energy or laser energy is applied depending on the patient's history and specific anatomy. This creates a small area of scar tissue which acts like a road block to the AFib electrical pathways so the abnormal electrical signals are not able to travel throughout the heart to create the chaotic rhythm. Catheter ablations treat the AFib from the inside of the heart and can be done alone or in conjunction with an epicardial or percutaneous (access to the heart through the skin) based ablation.

Continue reading the next installment of The Scoop where we cover how to treat AFib through Hybrid Convergent Approach