

State-of-the-art cardiovascular procedures offered to the very highest standards

Cardiovascular procedures can save lives in a gentle way and are also becoming increasingly important in aesthetic correction. Professor Kolvenbach is Senior Consultant at the Cardiovascular Centre of the Augusta Hospital in the Düsseldorf Catholic Hospital Group (VKKD). Professor Kolvenbach and his team offer the full spectrum of modern cardiovascular surgery, from routine procedures to the replacement of entire major arteries, and all incorporating the latest advancements in modern medicine.

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Small incisions that save lives – precision vascular surgery using high-tech methods

“A person is as old as their veins,” goes an old saying. Particularly when we get older, problems with veins and arteries can often have life-threatening consequences. In the Cardiovascular Centre at Düsseldorf’s Augusta Hospital, specialists treat arterial and venous diseases using the latest non-aggressive techniques.

All specialist clinics required for the comprehensive treatment of cardiovascular diseases are united under one roof here. In addition to cardiovascular surgery, this includes interventional radiology (imaging with minimally invasive procedures), and endovascular surgery (procedures inside the blood vessels).

Because it is possible to treat patients with catheters and stents, the need for more serious operations can often be averted. The Düsseldorf Catholic Hospital Group is the city’s largest provider of hospital services, which is why many patients are referred from other VKKD departments. Increasingly, patients are also coming from other regions of Germany or from abroad because of the exceptional reputation of the Cardiovascular Centre. The VKKD is also able to offer patients a suitable post-treatment recovery programme in a dedicated rehabilitation clinic.

Constriction, pain, numbness: the signs of cardiovascular problems

Circulatory disorders restrict blood flow, decreasing the supply of blood to the organs, the heart and the limbs. The most common symptoms of circulatory disorders of the legs are chronic pain in the calves and toes, which cause the affected person to walk slower or to have to stop and pause every so often (hence the name ‘shop window disease’). But the core blood vessels, i.d. those that supply blood to the head and the brain, can also be affected. Deposits on the inner walls of the blood vessels can form small clumps or the vascular walls themselves can bulge out, an event known as an aneurysm. If a blood vessel in the head bursts, it can cause a stroke, in which case the specialists at the Augusta Hospital will have to perform surgery immediately. The heart is supplied with blood by a network of surrounding vessels. If one of these vessels ‘closes up’, the blockage can be removed by various minimally invasive interventions using catheters or by operations involving heart-lung machines. Another domain of the Cardiovascular Centre is the treatment of life-threatening aneurysms caused by weakened vascular walls of the aorta in the chest or stomach area.

Varicose veins are a particularly common venous disease and can also be removed in the Cardiovascular Centre using the latest minimally invasive treatment techniques.

Minimally invasive procedures as standard

A key focus both in the clinic’s research and its day-to-day patient care is the development of minimally invasive techniques for procedures that are less traumatic for the patient. As one of the main providers of minimally invasive aortic procedures to patients from a wide catchment area, Düsseldorf’s Augusta Hospital is now able to treat nearly 90 per cent of people with aortic aneurysms in this way. Use of these minimally invasive methods greatly reduces complications and mortality rates, which in the past were often associated with cardiovascular procedures, and significantly decreases the amount of time that people have to stay in hospital.