



Who Are Cardiothoracic Surgeons?

Cardiothoracic surgeons are specialists who treat disorders of the heart, lungs, esophagus and major blood vessels of the chest cavity. Commonly treated conditions include: coronary artery disease; cancers of the lung, esophagus and chest wall; abnormalities of the great vessels and heart valves; birth defects of the chest and heart; tumors in the organs contained in the chest cavity; and transplantation of the heart and lungs.

Cardiothoracic surgeons can choose to focus their expertise in one of several areas, including adult cardiac (heart) surgery, congenital heart surgery, and general thoracic surgery, which focuses on disorders of the lungs and esophagus.

The specialty offers a great deal of professional and personal satisfaction. It may be undertaken in a number of different private practice or academic settings. New techniques are constantly evolving, and surgeons are able to operate on both younger and older and sicker patients with increasing co-morbidities and still obtain improving outcomes. With the baby boomers approaching their seventh decade of life, this is a time in which cardiothoracic surgical procedures are frequently needed. Minimally invasive techniques continue to evolve and hold great promise. Less invasive techniques generally provide a more prompt recovery and are thus widely sought after by the public.

For more information, please visit <http://www.sts.org>.