

KFSH Reduces Length of Stay for Children After Minimally Invasive Heart Surgery by 44%

RIYADH , SAUDI ARABIA, August 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Centre (KFSH) in Riyadh has reduced the hospital stay of children undergoing surgery for congenital heart defects by 44% among patients eligible for minimally invasive procedures, with the average length of stay falling from nine days in conventional surgery to five days.

This reduction was achieved through KFSH's minimally invasive pediatric congenital heart surgery program, launched in mid-2023. The approach enables surgeons to access the heart through a small incision between the ribs rather than dividing the breastbone, as in conventional open-heart surgery. The program has established KFSH as a regional leader in advanced minimally invasive surgery for children with congenital heart defects and the only center in the region performing minimally invasive procedures for left-sided congenital heart defects.

Dr. Hani Al-Sarjani, Executive Director of the Heart Centre of Excellence at KFSH, said the successful use of minimally invasive surgery in 54 pediatric congenital heart cases reflects the maturity of the program and its ability to manage highly delicate and complex conditions.

He noted that the approach reduces surgical impact on the chest wall, helping ease post-operative pain, support earlier breathing and movement, and accelerate recovery, while creating a less burdensome treatment experience for children and their families.

Dr. Maryam Alomair, leading this program stated that minimally invasive heart surgery in children requires exceptional precision due to the small size of pediatric anatomy and the sensitivity of operating on the heart at an early age. It also depends on close coordination among cardiac surgery, anesthesia, and intensive care teams, particularly in very small patients. Among the cases treated was a three-month-old infant weighing just four kilograms.

Shorter hospital stays also improve the efficiency of care within the Heart Centre by reducing the need for post-operative admission, increasing flexibility in scheduling eligible cases, and enabling more patients to access highly specialized care.

King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre has been ranked first in the Middle East and Africa and 12th globally among the world's top 250 academic medical centers for 2026. It was also recognized as the most valuable healthcare brand in the Kingdom and the Middle East for 2026, according to Brand Finance, and listed by Newsweek among the World's Best Hospitals,

World's Best Smart Hospitals, and World's Best Specialized Hospitals for 2026.

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