

Acute MI and Rehabilitation from the Patient's Perspective

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- If you have any questions,
please feel free to ask anytime
- How I got here

Family History

- Paternal uncle, John, died at age 39 at work in his camera shop in Richland.
- Oldest uncle, died with a heart attack at age less than 50.
- All 4 other paternal uncles died with heart attacks before 60.
- My father and one uncle lived to their 80's.
- Cousin, Uncle John's oldest son, massive heart attack age 35, survived.

First ER Trip--26 Years Before 2nd Trip

- First: Thanksgiving, 1989. Severe chest pain Friday into Saturday morning. Went to ER feeling this like my paternal relatives. Realized family history meant higher risk. ECG, blood work 'normal', did not indicate a myocardial infarction.
- Unsatisfying, still concerned this was a cardiac problem. ER physician did not want to release me. Asked about other activities. Football with teenage nephews—diagnosis of chest wall pain. Physician satisfied, discharged. I remained concerned. Pain gradually improved over several days

2nd Trip To ER

- 9.24.2011: early morning chest pain, up reading newspaper at 5am. Mild chest and shoulder pain.
- Unusual to have pain like this.
- Got up to feed the birds, did some tree pruning, pleasant activities, pain went away. Felt relieved, a physician had told me that serious pain did not go away—so this couldn't be serious.
- Went back in the house, sat down to read the newspaper, pain returned, same intensity—much milder than ER Visit #1
- Concerned these were 'real pains' – went to ER

2nd ER Visit

- Felt at age 63, my family history was less important because I had made it past the age my uncles had their problems
- Went to ER anticipating being told this is a minor problem and not heart related.
- Triage to immediate evaluation.
- Tests 'not conclusive'—to me, meant that the pain was not cardiac.
- Decided to go home.
- Informed I couldn't go home until doctor saw me. Meanwhile, my wife encouraged me to stay and get further testing.
- My family physician, Dr. Funk, came to the ER, listened to my desire to leave, told me my concerns were too narrow, I had to be concerned for my wife and to make sure this was not serious.

2nd ER Visit

- ER physician saw me. Told me the importance of cardiac cath. Said in the past people like me would leave the hospital and die. ‘We don’t have to have that happen anymore.’ Emphatic. I agreed to have the cardiac cath.
- Team brought together to do my study a few hours later.
- When doctors were ready in lab, transfer in progress, an acute patient pushed past me to go first in the lab (49 year old man—no HIPAA violation, he became my roommate). I went from being very important to less important.
- Study indicated I needed a stent which was placed.
- Went home in 24 hours.

Post Hospital Care

- Both hospitals' Rehab programs called me wanting me to start. Why rehab, I didn't have a heart attack!
- Delayed scheduling start of rehab.
- Talked to a physician friend about rehab who said I had a heart attack. 'There is no such thing as a small heart attack.' That made me realize I needed to do rehab.
- No further problems.