



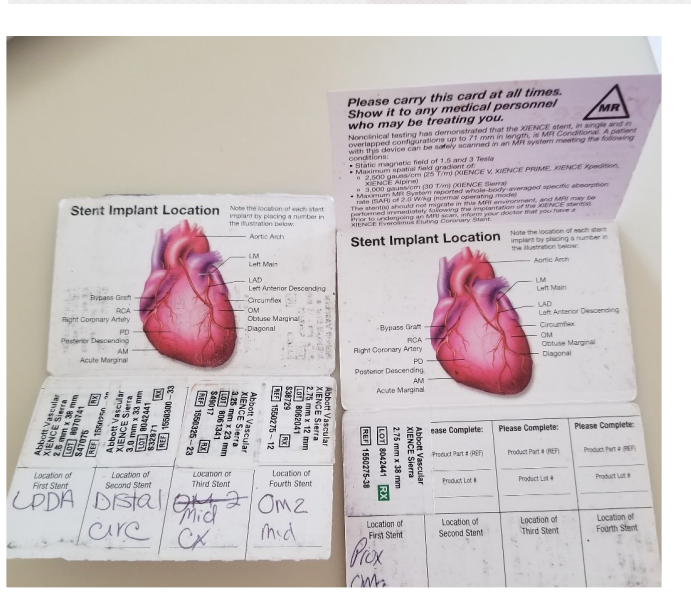
MARK LANTZ: CARDIAC ARREST SURVIVOR

Million Hearts® in Action

[Strategies for Achieving Million Hearts® Goals]

Mark Lantz thought the burning sensation he was feeling in his chest during his regular treadmill run was from a cold. Mark worked out routinely, never smoked, and thought of himself as in good health. {include swimming photo near this paragraph at the start} He was pretty sure he just had a cold and was ready to leave the next day for a trip to Florida visiting friends and family. "I thought the warmth and sunshine would make me feel better."

But over the next five weeks in Florida, Mark didn't really feel better. At night as he laid down to go to sleep he would feel the burning sensation. "I never once thought it was a heart problem, I just took an antacid and would push it out of my mind."



Yet, it kept happening. Many nights. And then during the day. It happened once saying goodbye to his niece, and another time while playing lacrosse with his nephew. He talked about it with his friend and they decided it was an ulcer. Finally, on one of the last nights of his stay the antacids were no longer doing the trick. He woke his father in law Fred to take him to the emergency room. "But I still didn't think I was having a heart attack," Mark reflected.

Fred dropped him at the ER door to go look for parking but Mark didn't even make it through the entranceway before he was grabbed by the attendants for an immediate EKG.

Mark's blockage was extensive: 99 percent in one artery and more than 70 percent in four other arteries. He received five stents that day in Florida and now carries a stent implant locator card.

Upon returning home Mark was committed to going through cardiac rehabilitation; while it was optional in his case, Mark felt it was important to learn all he could because he never thought it could happen to him in the first place. “Everybody thought it was crazy, I was a week away from my 60th birthday, and many folks said you are the fittest person we know; they didn’t believe it,” Mark said.

Mark was inspired by the cardiac rehab process, and being one of the youngest participants, he often encouraged and inspired others during their sessions. He never missed a class and found that he was needing some of the reassurance that the cardiac rehab process provided.

“For a couple weeks after the surgery I was nervous going to sleep and you deal with some anxiety after something like this, cardiac rehab lets you know it is normal and what you can do for yourself,” said Mark.

All the information on diet and nutrition shared during cardiac rehab was really impactful for Mark. He is now a label-reader and watches his sodium intake, “no more munching on pretzels after dinner for me,” he joked.



Mark’s top three takeaways from his heart attack and the rehabilitation experience are:

- 1) Pay attention to your body. “I am hard-headed and I ignored lots of stuff,” recollected Mark. “I didn’t want to go to the emergency room, but I am sure glad I did.”
- 2) Watch your diet. “There is so much you can do to eat better.”
- 3) Participate in a cardiac rehabilitation program. “That was a good move, everyone there makes you feel like you are going to be alright.”