

How I spent my Summer

.... by Joni (Joanna Walker) Anderson

This summer was full of events. I had a heart attack on June 26th. I had surgery July 2nd and spent the whole month of July either in the hospital or rehab. I just came home Friday, August 3rd. What an ordeal. I found out in May I had angina then boom!!

I found out that I was born with the heart defect but it took 66 years to rear its ugly head. I have a rare anomaly where the right artery and the left artery came together behind the pulmonary muscle. That is not the correct place for them to connect, because the coronary artery lives there. Therefore, after 66 yrs all three of them start fighting? Or like my daughter puts it, the two big ones bullied the smaller one.

This was discovered by doing an angiogram. I was supposed to be in ICU for 2 days and was only there for one, as well as being in hospital for 7-10 days and was out in 7 days! I spent 22 days in rehab at the Pearl in Lake Oswego. All this time I was not up to visitors except my daughter and really good friend.

Here is the real scoop:

June 26th at 8:30pm, I felt a panic attack which quickly moved into Angina but then Nitro did not touch it so wondered if it might be heart attack. Considered calling 911 but decided at 11pm to go to bed instead cuz with the Angina attacks rest helps. Woke up at 1am still feeling crappy considered calling 911 again but went back to sleep woke up at 3am feeling better so decided to call dr. office in morning when they opened, which I did. The triage nurse took my info to the dr. but she did not review it immediately. Called back at 1pm. everyone started scrambling and they told me to go to ER ASAP and don't drive. So I called my daughter at her work and she came as soon as she could and took me to ER.

I was given lots of flak for not calling 911. So I ask the dr. how things would have been different had I called 911. He said had I called 911 they would have taken me directly to surgery without knowing the specifics. In my case it was a good thing I didn't call 911 as it gave them time to do labs, other diagnostics and prepare better. hmmm Anyway I was admitted into the hospital at St. Vincent and the next day they did an

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angiogram and found my anomaly. They gave me blood thinners as they thought they were going to do a stint. Instead they found my problem had to wait a few days for blood to thicken again then did the surgery. This is only the 3rd surgery like this that Dr. Swanson has ever done. That is how rare it is. What can I say? I am a rare breed and so very special. 🍷

That's my story and I am sticking to it! Oh forgot to say I was the fun one at both the hospital and rehab. My sense of humor would not quit! Nurses and CNA's liked to hang out in my room. 😊
What got me through this with flying colors was God my Daughter Amanda and Grahame!!!!

Joni Anderson