

INSPIRING HOPE

Jamie Lanier (36) - "I've been blessed with incredible doctors at Nationwide Children's"

Born with Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF) and two holes in my heart, my congenital heart defect (CHD) was first diagnosed at age 1 (in 1977). However, I'm fortunate that my first open heart surgery was performed at John Hopkins Memorial (Baltimore, Maryland) because (at that time) JH was the best in congenital heart research. My TOF results in low oxygenation of blood (back in the 1970's TOF patients were known as "blue babies").



Returning to Columbus, Ohio, I was put on a strict diet, coupled with a list of guidelines/limitations that my parents were to raise me by. Growing up with TOF was enlightening to say the least. I was not allowed to play football, so I focused on wrestling, track, and volleyball. It wasn't until 1989, when my cardiologist started noticing my pulmonary valve was failing (leaking). Then, in July of 1990 (at 14), I was having my second open heart surgery at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. They replaced my pulmonary valve with a tissue valve (pig valve) and it was supposed to last approximately 10 years. However, I kept it for 17 years. I can attribute the long life of the pig valve to my athletics, diet, and moral support from my mother who never treated me like a heart patient!! I was extremely fortunate she was a nurse and understood my condition. A funny memory of growing up with a heart condition was everyday opening my low sodium lunch and no one at the table wanting to trade food with me.

I must admit that I became complacent with my heart condition. Then, in 2007, my cardiologist noticed my 17 year old valve had become calcified and would need replaced. At the time there was a feasibility study (non FDA approved procedure "Melody Trial") that I was asked to be part of 34 patients from the U.S. were selected and only 3 centers were given approval to perform the operation (implanting a pulmonary valve in the cath lab without undergoing open heart surgery). So after several pre-qualifying tests and a plethora of paperwork I found myself (at age 31) in the cath lab at Nationwide Children's Hospital implanting another tissue valve (a bovine cow valve this time instead of a pig). The transcatheter valve replacement was a success and eventually FDA approved in 2009.

Most recently I had my first heart episode while playing indoor volleyball in February of 2012. I underwent an electrical study on my heart in the cath lab which resulted in the implanting of an (ICD) Implantable cardioverter-defibrillator. In addition with this new ICD or "hardware" in my chest now my son thinks I resemble the superhero Ironman ... so now I'm the coolest dad on the planet! This recent procedure was a turning point for me. An unexpected heart episode can really ground a person and make you embrace everyday life.

I have been blessed with a splendid team of cardiologists at Nationwide Children's Hospital and I have an amazing support system of family and friends.

If you've had a similar experience, or would just like to talk to Jamie about living with heart disease, his contact information is listed below!

Mended Hearts of Central Ohio

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It is great to be alive – and to help others