

# Felix's Stroke Survival Story

*"My symptoms came awfully sudden. I had a tingling in my face, and then I had numbness in my lips, and I thought something was strange and then I went to move, and I couldn't move my right side."*

*"So I get myself to the phone and call 911 and told them that I was having a stroke, and they said, 'How do you know?' and I said, 'I know what the symptoms are. I used to be in the fire department.'"*

*"I was at work. I work in Nashua, New Hampshire. It was quitting time and I was in the stairwell, and my phone rings. Usually I don't answer it, because it's a number that I didn't know. But I said, oh, I'm going to answer it. That's when they told me, 'We think Felix had a stroke.'"*

*"I heard about the window of time for the medication if you had a stroke, so I knew time was of the essence, and being right across the street from the hospital was a big help for me because from the time the ambulance got there until the time I was in the ER, it was 25 minutes from the time I called 911, so there was a good chance of me recuperating from the stroke."*

*"From there I went for the CT scan, and then I had an MRI and definitely ruled it was a stroke, and from there I was in the hospital for four weeks."*

*"I had slurred speech, so once I went up to the RMU I had OT, PT, and speech therapy. Speech therapy was three weeks."*

*"They have you do these all different exercises for your mouth, and they have the tongue exercise. You have cheek exercise, and then you also have vocal exercise. It worked out real well. And they figured I was okay. My speech had come back."*

*"I had OT and PT for four weeks. If the RMU doctors and nurses felt that I needed more rehab, they let the social worker know, and he would contact the insurance company."*

*"I just kept encouraging him, that, 'It's going to improve. I mean, you've done this. You weren't able to do that, now you can do this.' I would just try to reinforce to him that it's not the end of the world. 'You're here. I could have been burying you, I mean.'"*

*"The thing was sitting in the house all day, not being able to go anywhere. I'd do my exercises, then I'd sit on the sofa, watch TV, watch soap operas, which after two months of that you're ready to say, 'Okay. That's enough.' So, once I started going to the gym and being able to drive, that helped a lot."*

*"He's more active than I am in a lot of ways."*

*"I never thought I'd get back to work that quick. Of course, I was a little frustrated because I wanted to get back quicker, but I figured 10 months after suffering a full right-side stroke. That's pretty quick."*

*"Don't give up. Don't get frustrated. There is light at the end of the tunnel, and I'm a living proof of it."*