

# Living with High Blood Pressure

I literally took my life for granted because everything seemed to be happening so good even though I had a stressful life.

Before I was diagnosed with high blood pressure I had yes, I did have kids, family, but my life was again hectic because I started a company, very stressful. I was working 14 hour days. Marriage was kind of on the rocks because of that.

I was 40 when I was diagnosed with hypertension, which is high blood pressure. My naiveté was saying that only old people get high blood pressure.

During the moment that I was told that, I had just played five games of racquetball and I went to the doctor for a checkup. They told me that I was having a heart attack.

We sat up at the hospital for 12 hours, and after they did a angio, came out of there and they told me I'll be taking blood pressure medication the rest of my life.

Even though I thought I was living a healthy life, made me aware that I had to do a much better job. I cut out how many hours I would work in a day. Immediately.

I totally stopped eating fried foods immediately.

For me, it was important to reduce stress because I know strokes and heart attacks come with high blood pressure. I know I had no other choice but to try to mentally take care of myself and get stronger through all the unknown that I was not expecting to happen in my life.

I went through probably six years of nothing but, most people would say, bad luck. I found out that bad, very bad investments had failed. And so a lot of money that I had worked so hard for was gone.

And then two weeks later, I found out my daughter was killed. Matter of fact, I was outside running. It's a beautiful day. June 27th, 2009. And my brother calls me. He said, "Your daughter's been killed." And right away I just screamed in the middle of the lake and people are looking at me really strange. And I ran to where the accident was.

During the time my daughter passed, my business technically shut down because I basically shut down.

I was grieving so deeply. I was walking around really angry, which was making my blood pressure go up even higher. I had two choices. At that moment I knew either my life was going to go up or down. I knew it. I knew I had to take care of myself. That's a very tough thing to do because I think, again, it goes back to how much you love yourself. And I guess I went into my soul from a spiritual perspective, to try to find that inner peace.

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And then I started running more, started training for an Ironman. I got stronger and stronger.

To make sure my blood pressure doesn't get high, first thing I do is meditate and then I pray.

Take my pill and an aspirin at the same time every morning. It's a ritual. I do that every morning.

Changing my eating habits tremendously. I was a vegan at one time.

Then I go to the gym. I think today exercise is the best is our best friend. I would suggest that anybody that get high blood pressure, they take it serious cause strokes or heart attacks come behind that and take it serious by changing your bad habits.

My business is doing phenomenal. Not only is it doing great, but my people are doing great.

This is Ty, my grandson and Alexa, my office manager, who I'm mentoring to one day take over this company. We do commercial cleaning. We do schools. We've got a lot of work with the county, festivals. I have this space strictly to do events working with leaderships, working with nonprofits, to help the community.

So all those things happening brought me to today to understand I can live a better lifestyle, I can overcome tragedies, I can surround myself around good people, good energy.

I can help change the lives of other people by being a good person and through my faith and through a lot of hard work, exercising and managing blood pressure, I'm still living today, I still have a spark today.

I still can make a difference in people's lives today.

The advice I can give you, you know, is always get your blood pressure checked on a yearly basis, get checkups on a yearly basis. I'm going to teach you how to avoid it by starting early, and you'll be more aware of that.

You can get through this life through many of the unknown.