

Patient Story: John's Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Diagnosis

I had been feeling poorly for a while. Shortness of breath. Not really chest pains. More kind of like just a discomfort in the chest. And I had thought that it was just getting old.

And so I just didn't think much of it until I passed out.

One day got out of bed, stood up and then just hit the floor. And my wife said, that's not normal, you need to go see a doctor.

And so I went to the doctor and they diagnosed me with HOCM.

I'd never heard of it before. And so I had just assumed that it was high blood pressure.

It was terrifying to hear that your heart has a problem, you know, a structural deficiency.

So to get this diagnosis and have them explain it to me, yeah, it was instructive. It was good to hear.

The first treatment is with medication. And so you take pills and you deal with what small side effects there are. And you see if that makes you feel any better. For me, it didn't.

So I had to then talk to them about surgery

That's not easy to hear. But making that all better is the fact that there is a procedure for it.

I remember being wheeled out of the waiting room, you know, the prep room and down the hallway. And that was it. Next thing I knew, it was a number of hours later and I was up in the ICU.

I went in six months after my surgery and, you know, everything's healed fine and my heart's beating okay. And so everything, you know, everything's going on just fine.

"Everything is going great"

I don't get as tired as I used to. And physical exercise doesn't exhaust me as much as it did before. And there's a certain calmness and knowing that there was a problem that's been fixed. The doctors told me beforehand that not having this taken care of would take about five years off my life.

Having it taken care of isn't going to add anything. It's just going to not have that five years taken care of. So really, it's not a matter of feeling better than you used to feel.

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It's more a matter of feeling like you should have felt if you didn't have this problem.

It's just part of my health history now.

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