

Patient Perspective

LIVING WITH HEART FAILURE

My LVAD Gave Me a New Lease on Life



I am the very fortunate recipient of an implanted HeartMate 3 (Abbott, St. Paul, Minnesota) LVAD that I have had for nearly 2 years.

I have severe dilated left ventricular cardiomyopathy that I have dealt with for years. Before receiving my HeartMate 3, my condition had deteriorated to the point that I was given a dire prognosis. I was unable to walk more than a few steps without resting. My defibrillator was discharging frequently (and I can attest that a shock from an implanted defibrillator once a lifetime is more than anyone should have to endure!). I was receiving ambulance rides to emergency departments on a regular basis, and I was to the point that I really did not want to put my family or myself through any more pain or agony.

My wife and I had limited information about left ventricular assist devices (LVADs) but were cautioned by doctors that implantation was a very risky procedure and that quality of life with a VAD was significantly diminished. Fortunately, I had begun seeing a cardiologist from the University of Colorado Health, Dr. Amrut Ambardekar, who specializes in heart failure and VADs. After a couple of consultations with Dr. Ambardekar, my wife and I were convinced that an LVAD was the best option for me. I agreed to

participate in the HeartMate 3 clinical trial. My surgery was a success, thanks to Dr. Joseph Cleveland, and I was released from the hospital in 2 weeks with a new lease on life. Shortly thereafter, I was enjoying time with my family and friends and was resuming a normal life. I, along with my relatives and acquaintances, was amazed. When I am playing golf, or participating in other activities, I am almost in disbelief that my life could change for the better so dramatically.

Although I now feel like the luckiest man in the world, I must say that to get to this point could have been so much easier and sooner had my doctors been informed about the LVAD option. A few weeks after implantation, I saw one of my doctors who was originally very skeptical about the LVAD system. He gave me a bear hug and said, “You look remarkable, we should have gone this route sooner.” My wife and I are enthusiastic participants in Abbott’s Patient Ambassador Program, which serves to help educate people in the medical field about the fantastic benefits of the HeartMate LVAD. We hope, through our work, that more people will get a second chance to live a normal life, like I have. My rebirth, as we call it, has been fantastic.

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Please note: Mr. Dolan is a HeartMate 3 LVAD Ambassador.