

My name is Danuta Teresiak.

I have always been slim, lead a healthy lifestyle, exercised and had normal cholesterol and low blood pressure.

On 13/04/2016 at the age of 48, I was with my daughter on our way to work. Whilst walking to the train station I felt a sudden onset of pain in my left arm starting from my jaw down to my wrist. I also felt a little bit breathless. As we walked up the ramp at the train station, the pain worsened and I felt faint.

My daughter recognised these symptoms as heart attack and alerted the train station staff who immediately called the ambulance.

The paramedics treated me with aspirin and GTN. My pain went away approx. 15 mins after arriving at the hospital. The first blood tests showed that my troponin level was raised to 12 and the second to 402. I was told that I had a heart attack and that I would have to stay in hospital and have an angiogram the following day.

I couldn't believe what I was hearing, because I always thought that I was fit and healthy and a heart attack was the last thing I would expect. However, what I didn't know was that things were going to get worse.

At approx. 6pm the same day the pain in my left arm returned, but this time it was a lot more severe. Whilst lying on the hospital bed, I passed out and when I woke up I saw a lot of doctors and nurses fussing over me. I was again treated with medications and rushed to the Cath lab for an emergency angiogram. I was diagnosed with SCAD in a small artery on the left side under my heart. Luckily, I didn't have a stent put in. I spent the next 6 days in hospital, because my blood pressure was very low and my heart rate very fast. I was put on Aspirin, Plavix, Metoprolol and Atorvastatin. My troponin level peaked at 45000. I have been told that I have 10% damage to my heart.

After I was discharged from hospital I spent 2.5 months at home as I felt too weak to return to work. I had bad side effects from the medications and my cardiologist decided to take me off all medications except for aspirin. Four months after my SCAD I attended my daughter's wedding and I was so grateful that I was there to witness this happy moment.

I now feel much better and almost back to normal physically, but I am scarred psychologically as every little ache in the chest area scares me and I get very anxious. I am now practicing meditation and it helps to keep me calm.

It was a terrible experience to go through, but I am thankful that I'm still here and grateful to my daughter for her quick thinking in getting me the help that I needed.