



The Ticker Talker

Mended Hearts ★ Diablo Chapter 254

Dedicated to inspiring hope in heart disease patients and their families

www.MendedHearts254

March, 2010

General Meeting

Saturday, March 27, 1:30 P.M.
Kaiser Medical Office Building, Third
floor Conference Room

All you wanted to know about
defibrillators but were afraid to ask!

Speaker: Jeff Kim.

Jeff has been a firefighter and paramedic who works with the San Mateo Fire Department SWAT team. He has been training people all over the state of California for 29 years on the use and function of portable defibrillators and will demonstrate their use for us. He says he'll be happy to answer your questions.

**FOR YOUR CALENDAR:
SAVE THE DATE!**

**The Annual Picnic and Barbeque will be
held this year Saturday, JUNE 26.**

The Board decided to have the picnic in early summer, instead of late summer. There will be a regular program in July, we will take August off, and resume our **regular fourth Saturday** of the month programming in September.

Mark your calendar now so you won't miss any of the regular meetings, and prepare to have a wonderful social time at the June picnic.

Report: February Meeting

The speaker, Dr. Christopher Forrest, Interventional Cardiologist, at Kaiser in Walnut Creek began his talk with a history of the development of interventional cardiology beginning with angioplasty in the mid 1970's, and telling about the progress and changes since then.

He explained the aim is to prevent heart attacks by removing blockages in the arteries which keep the blood from getting to the heart. He said the process of blockage starts in the teens or early 20's, and gradually builds up. The process takes years.

The first treatment is medication, and if that does not solve the problem, then an angiogram is done to see where the problem is and how to correct it.

He explained about the cath lab, what is done and what is not done in the Kaiser Walnut Creek and why some patients are sent to other hospitals.

He also said that Sutter Hospital in Oakland, in which many heart patients have been treated, will not have a contract with Kaiser anymore, and patients can expect to be sent to San Francisco.

He answered many questions from the large group attending, many of whom had been patients at the cath lab.

Heart Failure - what is it?



The many terms used for heart problems can often be confusing? Heart attack? Heart failure? What is heart failure?

Basically heart failure is simply reduced ability of the heart muscle to pump blood, either to the lungs or to other parts of the body. It comes on gradually. Its symptoms can include tiredness, dizziness, and shortness of breath.

The most common causes are high blood pressure, diabetes, and coronary artery disease.

UCLA's Division of Geriatrics has 10 tips for handling heart failure.

They are (briefly)

1. Cut back on salt in our diet.
2. Lose weight.
3. Follow a heart-healthy diet.
4. Exercise according to doctor's orders.
5. Knock off bad habits, like smoking or keeping drinking alcohol to a minimum - and make sure it isn't interfering with your medications.
6. Take your medications religiously.
7. Monitor your body - weight yourself and

take your blood pressure readings regularly.

8. Monitor your medications. Make sure your doctor and your pharmacist know exactly what you are taking, and are watching out for interactions.

9. Regulate your potassium - eat bananas and citrus fruits regularly. If you are taking ACE inhibitors, which tend to increase your potassium level, work closely with your doctor and dietician.

10. Avoid sick people. Wash you hands, avoid touching your face, get your shots every year, delay hugging your grandkids if they are sneezing.

Knowledge is power!

If you come to Mended Hearts meetings regularly, you have learned much about the heart-healthy diet, how to lose weight, where the salt is in your diet, and exercise.

Mended Hearts aims to give you the knowledge and support to follow a healthy lifestyle, learn more about handling heart failure, heart attacks, coronary heart disease, diabetes, and other problems that interfere with your enjoyment of life.

Accreditation Meeting for Visitors Set for April 24

Mended Hearts sponsors and trains visitors to go to the hospital to visit heart patients, giving them comfort, hope and information. Visitors are trained and accredited. After training, new visitors visit with experienced visitors, before going on their own. Each year experienced visitors must also be re-accredited.

This year the training will take place on Saturday, April 24, 9:00 A.M. in the third floor Conference Room, the same place in which the regular meetings are held. There will be

time for the visitors to have lunch, before the General meeting will at 1:30 P.M.

For those members who have been considering becoming visitors, this is the time to get on board. You will find it a very satisfying and worthwhile use of your time.

For more information contact either of the Visiting Co-chairs, B.J. Boone at 925 939-4998, or JoAnn Johnson, 925 685-1869, or see either one of them at the General Meeting on Saturday, March 27.

Watch out for E mail information

In the National Mended Hearts bulletin, it says several members have inquired about an e-mail that is circulating as a viral "Public Service Announcement" about the benefits of keeping by the bedside a crystallized form of aspirin in response to the symptoms of a heart attack. **The American Heart Association says that nothing should take away from a patient calling 9-1-1 FIRST at the signs of a heart attack.**

And National also reminds us that the old e mail about "cough" resuscitation is erroneous.

Which Hospital?



One of the inquiries at the February meeting of Dr. Forrest was what happens when the ambulance comes, and you want to go to your own hospital instead of the "nearest" hospital. The member asked if it wasn't better to go to your own hospital with all your records, if it were just a few minutes farther away. Dr. Forrest answered a resounding **NO** - the nearest hospital, because minutes count in a heart attack.

New Public Education Program Available

Mended Hearts, in partnership with Daiichi Sankyo and Eli Lilly, is sponsoring a new public education program to help patients and their loved ones deal with the physical and emotional effects of surviving a heart event and get back to life.

They are providing heart-healthy insights and tools to help you and your loved ones make the most of a second chance.

Check out the web site at

HealthyHeartsinHarmony.com and take the quiz to find out how knowledgeable you are about heart health.

What Can I do to Help Myself?

From *Hearts in Harmony*:

It is important to set small goals to keep yourself healthy. Of course you should never start a new exercise or diet program - or change an existing one - without consulting your doctor.

Some examples of small goals include:

- Skip second helpings of pasta, potatoes and rice.
- Drink water or seltzer instead of regular soda.
- Make food portions smaller than your fist.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park farther away from a store's door and walk there.
- Take a walk after dinner or during lunch time at work.

Patient Visiting:

During February visiting was still limited due to concerns about the flu.

February our visitors at Kaiser Hospital in Walnut Creek saw six patients. Those visiting were Don and JoAnn Johnson and Jim Miller. There were 30 phone visits in February. Callers were Beverly Bortin, Tim Correia, Wayne King and B.J. Boone

It is now time for visiting to resume fully. With the training coming up in April, this is the time for new visitors to get started.

Treasurer's Report

\$ Treasurer Anna Lee reports that there is \$1050.67 in the Chapter's treasury. She thanks BJ Boone, Mr and Mrs. Thomas Matter, Paul Prigge and Gino Riccardi for their memberships or renewals.

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Sunshine by Nancy Baker

I make phone calls to Mended Hearts members because I want to learn more about our members and share it with you. My first call was to Evelyn Holtzer. She inspired me so much, I decided to make her my featured

person this month.

Evelyn had a four-way bypass operation in April of 2009. Her recovery plan is as follows; a positive attitude, an exercise class at a Senior Center, a water exercise class at the Y. When the weather is cold and/or rainy, she goes to Target and walks the aisles to get her exercise. I asked her if that was expensive because she might see a cute blouse that she thought would look great on her. But, she says she never looks at the merchandise so she doesn't have to stop and buy something before she goes home. Her favorite exercise is dancing to music in the privacy of her home. Doesn't she inspire you, too?

Some of us who had our heart operation a few years ago can get sloppy about our diet and exercise. She made me decide to go back to doing what I did after my bypass operation - will that happen to you, too?

I don't know how old Evelyn is but I would guess she is a tad over 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 etc. She says she is so grateful that she has been given this second chance. She is grateful for the support she gets from Mended Hearts.

Her son is taking her on a cruise to Mexico so she won't be at the next Mended Heart's meeting but when you see her in April have a chat with her and get inspired, too. I know I did just talking to her on the telephone.

P.S. She loves Ice cream

P.P.S. She wants to tell people who have trouble sleeping after their heart surgery to not give up, eventually a good night's sleep will return. It just takes awhile after surgery.

New Board Members: The Board has appointed a new Vice-chairperson, Eric Besig, to replace the Hazel Horti, who is now President. The President appointed Muriel Haupt as Publicity Chair. They will be introduced to you at the March meeting, and added to our Masthead next issue, after you meet them.

Thank You. . . .

to Kaiser Permanente Volunteer services who provide the facilities for printing this newsletter and the postage to mail it. We are very grateful for your help.