

Denying What Your Gut is Telling You!



Nurses can be very stubborn. I keep telling them that I can walk, but they insist that I stay on the stretcher as they transfer me from the emergency room.

So here I am in denial. How can this be possible....me a fitness instructor/personal trainer/studio business owner....the one who is supposed to be strong... infallible.. now diagnosed with heart disease!!!

It all started 2wks ago while I was vacationing in Cuba - I was relaxing and enjoying the time off from a busy schedule! I of course wanted to work out so I went to the gym in Cuba and did some upper body exercises using weight machines I had never used before. Thinking wow this machine was quite heavy; not realizing the weight was listed in kilos and not pounds! "That was a mistake" I thought the next morning when I couldn't get out of bed to get dressed because my chest was pounding with sharp excruciating pain!...so I lay there trying to relax the muscles I thought were over stressed and then I realized, this is probably what my clients go thru after the workouts I give them...Not the same pain.... I really hope!

Well once I returned to my fitness studio teaching classes and training clients I continued to experience the same chest pain on and off. It seemed to get worse with the cardiovascular activity but I just brushed it off because I just came back from a week of not much cardio except walking the beach!

Then I started to notice the chest pain would come on with no explanation when I was just stressing over different everyday things and thought its probably just stress after a holiday and getting back into the work/kids/home routine.

Then I started to notice the chest pain would get so tight like I had an extra heavy 20lbs weight attached to my chest that wouldn't let up.

I continued to do my routines and I started to do them slower not understanding why.

Then when I was teaching my regular cardio with weights class on Tuesday morning I could barely push thru the entire class; the chest pain and shortness of breath lasted the full hour and was so sharp again just like in Cuba. At the end of the class I had tears streaming down my face and I was embarrassed to show my clients.

By Tuesday night I knew something was definitely not right but I still needed to be pushed from the people that love me to go get it checked out.

So here I am in the Urgent Care clinic and puzzling the doctors because I have no family history of heart disease, no diabetes, I'm female, fit, healthy, non-smoker, I don't fit the mold for someone suffering a heart attack. Yet my blood test results came back positive. I might have suffered a mild heart attack! Doctor's still not convinced due to my symptoms and my background of health, genetics, etc. They

continue with an ECG and a heart ultrasound that indicates my heart is strong no problems there! So the next procedure - angiogram - is done to look for any blockages in blood supply in the heart. Again doctors are assuming all will be clear and they are as surprised as I was shocked.. to find 2 partially blocked arteries, one at 95% and one main artery at 80%. This resulted in another procedure called angioplasty with the insertion of stents to repair the blockages.

After the procedure they clamped the area of the incision with what looked like a construction tool for 20 minutes to stop the artery from bleeding. Then I was told to lay still on my bed for 6 hrs without moving my leg or my head to allow the wound to clot and prevent it from bleeding again. Now for those that don't know me, 6 hrs laying in bed might sound like a great sleep but for me it was torture not to be able to move around like I'm so used to everyday, either teaching fitness classes or personal training clients!

So I did suffer a mild heart attack at 46 yrs of age!!! when I was in the best shape of my life and had completed my first full marathon just 7 months ago!

What has this taught me? That if I wasn't in the best shape up till now my cardiologist said I could have died very young... but I am still here and ready to take on the challenge of making myself even stronger to prove that being fit and living a healthy lifestyle was what helped me to live through this ordeal and now be available to help others going thru the same thing!

So what if I now have a list of 8 medications I am now taking daily... and so what if I take longer to get myself going... I am celebrating that I am back in the world... fully functioning without being hooked up to anymore hospital monitors or being attached to a hospital bed for endless days and nights!

Please take my real life lesson learned advice and don't put off what your gut tells you about your body!

Don't put off getting healthy and being fit because that is what really gives you more years to your life... and more memories to enjoy!!!

~ Nadia Bender

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