

## Tony's story

Last March I had a Sudden Cardiac Arrest while I was at the gym. Fortunately the staff were well trained, a defibrillator was available and I survived with no brain or heart damage. If it had happened anywhere else, where there was no defibrillator, I would almost certainly have died. Rather spookily, what turned out to be my cardiac nurse at my hospital was in the gym at the time of my SCA and assisted the gym staff.

I spent a couple of days in Intensive Care at my local hospital and was transferred to another hospital where I underwent an angioplasty and had a stent fitted in the obtuse marginal artery. So far as I understand it this was not considered the likely cause of the SCA and, as no reversible cause for the SCA was found, I was fitted with an ICD. I also had a Myoview scan which was negative.

I am a 62 year old male. When I had the SCA I was 61 and consider that I was fit and healthy, always had a low blood pressure, led a healthy lifestyle, ate healthy foods but I did have a fairly high cholesterol level (my cholesterol level is now significantly reduced - I take a statin).

The SCA was a real shock to me and everyone else. I have never suffered any serious illnesses or had any major operations and there is no history of heart disease in my family.

After the ICD was fitted I gradually regained my fitness and in August I ran 3.5 miles for the Harefield Charity and collected £1200. I now go to the gym 2 or 3 times a week, swim, train in Muay Thai boxing (although I can't spar due to the ICD), regularly run 3 miles, ride my bike and generally carry on as I did before.

At first, when I came home from hospital, I felt quite useless i.e. 'not the man I once was' and felt I had let everyone down. It took a while to get over that feeling and realise that it was not my fault - it can happen to anyone.

The only issue I have had with the ICD is that I am unable to have an MRI scan on my knee prior to keyhole surgery and I can't scuba dive anymore.

I take a beta blocker and am on aspirin each day but they don't prevent me doing anything.

I consider myself very fortunate that I was in the right place at the right time and that the people around me did what they had been trained to do.