

My Stroke Story
22 Feb 2011

Who knows what causes someone to have a stroke. I can only speculate for me that it was a cause of fast living, and not taking care of myself very well.

I was in my car driving along with my dog Biscuit in the back seat on my way to Petco after running a couple of other errands. Along with stopping at Petco, my mother had asked that I pick up something for her at the grocery store. I was driving along then felt really strange like I suddenly had the flu. I pulled into a parking lot thinking it would go away. It actually started to feel worse, to the point where I thought I might die right there. Anyway, I pulled out the parking lot thinking I could still make it to Petco. I noticed that I didn't have complete control of the car (I couldn't seem to handle the foot pedals properly, and had to adjust my vision) I managed to drive to Petco, and parked in a parking space. When I tried to get out of the car, I couldn't control my footing so I sat back down in the car. A while later, I started to vomit uncontrollably. At that point, I knew something was terribly wrong. I managed to drive the one mile home (somehow). Once home, because my footing was not right, I sat in the car (for how long I'm not sure), but it felt like 2 hours. My mother sent my cousin out to see why I was sitting in the car, at that point my speech was incoherent. My cousin took me to the steps and sat me down. I thought I could go upstairs and rest and it would all be okay, but my mother (who is a retired Registered Nurse) called for an ambulance to come and take me to the Hospital. Once at Valley Hospital, I remember having a tremendous headache and feeling nauseous. Much of my family had come. At some point, I woke up in ICU at Valley not seeing straight. Anyway, I spent a week at Valley, then was taken to Highline for re-hab for a week. I came home. I was a little disoriented and off balance, but thought I was okay. About a week later I begin to get a headache that did not go away, but got worse as the days went by. Little did I know, my brain was bleeding. Anyway, when it got to be really bad, I was taken to Harborview Emergency. I awoke at Harborview having had surgery for an aneurism that caused another Stroke (they had to remove part of my skull to relieve the bleeding). At that point, I could neither walk or communicate. All in all I spent 2 months at Harborview. I also had a Peg tube installed and was not allowed to eat any solid food.

Sine then, I have been recovering from the Strokes. I currently have Aphasia and don't have my full balance. The first year was really tough for me.

The things that have changed about me are remarkable! I feel like this is my second go round in life, and this time, I'm doing everything correctly. I have become more faithful (I even got baptized again and joined a Church). I go to Bible study and Joy Night services at the Church each week. I also go to the gym daily M-F, Belong to Toastmasters (to improve my speech) and I go to each meeting of the Stroke Group. I no longer drink or smoke.

I Feel like I have been given a 2nd chance at Life, and am looking forward to what the future holds. Thank God!