

HEART HERO 2019: ANNE SAFRAN DALIN

Heart attack survivor living with diabetes

Nominated by Diabetes Sisters, USA

“My promise for World Heart Day is to stay focused on taking care of my health and to ensure that I’m around to have a good, long and happy life with my family and friends. It’s a miracle that I’m here and feeling so well.”

In 2001, while I was at work I had a mild heart attack. They kept me in the hospital for a few days and placed two stents in my heart. I few years later I started to experience problems with my eyes, and when I went to my doctor they asked if I had diabetes. They tested me and found out that I was pre-diabetic. After my heart attack a dietician had recommended that I eat around 45g of carbohydrate at every meal, but it turns out that this had accelerated by diabetes.

At this point I knew nothing about the link between heart disease and diabetes. I only found out about it four years ago through my own research and I then discussed the connection between the two health issues with my cardiologist. This knowledge has made a huge difference to me, particularly as around the same time I found out that I had the early stages of kidney disease. Diabetes affects the heart, the kidneys, everything... they’re all connected.

Now, I feel amazingly well. But it’s taken a long time to get here. In January I had a kidney transplant thanks to my son donating one of his kidneys. I took part in the Suppers Program which helped teach me how to cook for people with diabetes, and was actually a big part in totally changing my eating patterns, and has made the biggest difference to me. In my last blood test my cardiologist was thrilled as every reading was within the normal range. Also, my A1C level was 5.2, similar to a person who doesn’t have diabetes! These improvements have enabled me to reduce the medications I have been taking.

For the last five years I have been proud to be part of DiabetesSisters, an organization that’s in half of the states in the US and growing steadily. We’re a peer support group that’s free for anyone with any type of diabetes.



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As part of DiabetesSisters and as co-leader of a local chapter of the organization, I am happy to share my experiences and help inspire people with CVD and diabetes to make those lifestyle changes that can make all the difference.

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