

Not the Face of a Heart Attack Kaiser Permanente

Linda:

I am not the face of a heart attack. I'm healthy, I'm active. I hike, I ski, I love to be outdoors. And I had a heart attack. When the pain first started in my chest, I remember thinking to myself like this might be a heart attack. When I got to the emergency room, the doctor came in and told me that there was trauma to my heart, and now we need to admit you. Then things got real.

Dr. Rivera:

I did tell her that because of her age, that we might find this entity known as SCAD, stands for spontaneous coronary artery dissection, so meaning a tear in the coronary artery. It's an issue that mostly affects women who are below the age of 50. SCAD is not a regular heart attack. It can do damage to the heart, but it's not the traditional risk factors such as smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol or family history.

Linda:

After I had the angiogram, Dr. Rivera came in and showed us a still image of my artery where they could see the tear.

Dr. Rivera:

What is helpful here at Kaiser Permanente is I also have an Interventionist, someone who is even more of an expert in the coronary arteries to take a look if I have concerns. Everybody comes together as a team, including our nurses, our lab, follow up, our clinical specialists and pharmacists, our mental health care, all of that is available without having to have a second referral outside the system.

Linda:

My experience with Kaiser Permanente's cardiac care was phenomenal. Dr. Rivera and everybody that I worked with was really attentive to me. I remember each one of them coming in and really connecting with me and looking me in the eye.

Dr. Rivera:

Linda took it all in stride. I love seeing a patient walk back into my clinic after I've seen them in the hospital and they are back to living their life to their fullest.

Linda:

Now that I've recovered, I think every day about loving my people and my kids and the people that mean the most to me and making sure that they know I'm going to be around for a long time.