

Congestive Heart Failure

Though I have been through a lot in my life, I was not prepared to hear the doctors say that my grandmother had congestive heart failure. She had already been through so much. She had a stroke when she was in her fifties, and she was never the same after that. She was always healthy though, and until this, had been OK for the most part. Now we had to face something that scared me. I didn't want to go through it again, though I do realize that grandparents don't live forever. I just didn't want to face losing her now.

What I didn't know about congestive heart failure is that the term is a little off. The heart is failing, but it may take awhile. There are ways to live longer, sometimes years longer when you are diagnosed with congestive heart failure, and you certainly don't have to start making funeral plans if you hear those words. The doctors assured us that if they got the excess fluid out of her system she should be able to go home soon.

Since then, my grandmother has had to go to the hospital once, but seems to be doing well right now. My grandfather has been taking care of her, but he's not as young as he used to be. He now has some nurses who come in each afternoon to give him a break. She has lived with congestive heart failure for a few years now, and by all accounts, she isn't going to leave us any time soon. You can never count on that, and congestive heart failure can turn at any time, but it's good to know that she's still here.

She's also happy. That's what is important to me. She seems to be better than she has been in a long time despite the diagnosis of congestive heart failure. Perhaps she has been looking back on her life and perhaps she likes what she sees. She has always been a wonderful woman, and the world could use more like her. She hasn't let congestive heart failure stop her from enjoying what she loves, even if she can't do what she used to do. She seems to be happy to see us when we visit, and she's still got that sparkle in her eye that I remember from when she was young and healthy. That's all I need to see.