

The following message has been sent to you in response to your eGroup message

Message From: Trina Wehle

Hi Yvonne,

I wanted to share my story with you so others can hopefully learn from my experience without having to live through it. I attribute my health scare to not paying attention to my own health, but the habits formed as a dispatcher certainly didn't help. On December 2, 2009 I suffered a pulmonary embolism and nearly died; a large blood clot formed in my left leg, split in half, both parts past through my heart then one half went into my left lung and the other went into my right lung. It felt like I was slowly drowning. I spent 3 days in ICU and 3 more days in the hospital before they released me. It took nearly two months before I could return to work fulltime. As a result of the embolism I had a limp in my left leg (from the vein being blown by blood clot). While I was being treated for the embolism they found I was prediabetic. I have spent the past year regaining my health and making a conscious effort to get up and move around the console, as that is one of the biggest factors the doctors consider to have been a contributing factor as to why I had a blood clot. Unfortunately in our profession it is very easy to get caught up in your work and stay glued to the console for hours at a time. I had other factors of course; I am overweight, didn't eat right, didn't get enough sleep and never drank enough water.....

The lesson I learned from this experience is that you must make your health a priority, even if your job is one that requires you to be stationary for most of your shift. Get up once an hour and take a walk around the room, answer the phone while standing, do knee bends or anything you can think of to keep your blood moving freely. Make exercise a priority in your time off, drink plenty of water and get 7 hours of sleep a night. It has taken me 13 months and two days (so far) to get my blood sugar under control, to lose 25 lbs, to regain the use of my left leg without a limp and to make exercise a priority. I was lucky that I didn't die on 12/02/09. Shortly after my experience I read about a dispatcher in Murrieta CA, Leanna McConnaughley, who died from an embolism in February 2010. I don't know that her experience was the same as mine but I can't help but feel that embolisms and/or DVT (deep vein thrombosis) are very real concerns for dispatchers.

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