

Davita is living in Alberta with Left single ventricle, single atrium, common AV valve, subpulmonary stenosis, bilateral cava, PDA post Fontan (and situs inversus). She has had four open heart surgeries in total, after her CHD was diagnosed in utero.



I have had to speak up and advocate for myself in many medical settings, particularly with doctors who are not familiar with CHD patients and/or Fontan patients. For example, one time I went into a walk in clinic for a urgent medical matter and the doctor seemed to listen to Google more than me when I said I couldn't take a particular medication he was trying to give me. I could see his screen! Eventually he listened to me, but it was a disheartening experience to have a medical professional not listen to me.

I also keep having to push to ensure medical professionals listen to me and accommodate my strategies to help with my medical trauma when I get a needle. Most of the time people do listen to me, however I have times when medical professionals laugh at me and don't listen, particularly because of my age and profession (nurse). There also continues to be a need for improved access to mental health support, particularly therapists who understand and are comfortable with CHD patients.

Living with CHD has had its ups and downs. Although I wouldn't want anyone else to experience the medical trauma, worry and stress that myself and my family have experienced, I wouldn't change anything about myself. It has helped shape who I have become. And the people I have met and continue to meet because of my CHD, from medical professionals to other CHDers, I am forever grateful!



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