

How Best Doctors Helped Jack

Best Doctors Stopped Jack from Undergoing an Unnecessary, High-Risk Surgery

Bonnie's dad, Jack, needed a heart valve replacement, and so his primary care physician referred him to a cardiologist. Jack underwent an angiogram, but it caused him to have a stroke, and so his cardiologist said he would need another procedure prior to the heart valve replacement. Given that Jack was in his late 80s and considering the complications with the angiogram, Bonnie and her brothers thought two procedures might be dangerous to his health.

They talked to several friends with medical backgrounds and Jack's other doctors, and no one thought this additional procedure – opening up a blockage in one of the carotid arteries – was appropriate or necessary to perform with the heart valve replacement.

Around this time, Bonnie received a postcard from Best Doctors, a free medical advisory service provided through her employer at no cost to her and her dependents, as well as her parents. She contacted Best Doctors right away to request a second opinion. Besides the Best Doctors clinical staff, Bonnie was guided by a member experience coordinator who was “the angel on the other line.” She made everything easy for Bonnie. “Nothing ever fell through the cracks,” she said.

As Jack's procedure was just around the corner, Bonnie wanted to get things done quickly, and her member experience coordinator “worked fast and furious,” while always keeping her updated about the case, which allowed her to update her brothers and parents. She had power of attorney for her father and as soon as she signed the medical release form, Best Doctors immediately began collecting Jack's medical records.

The lead physician on the case was available whenever Bonnie and her family needed questions answered. “He spent a crazy amount of time with us on the phone. He set up conference calls that were 45-60 minutes,” she explained. Once the records were collected, and Best Doctors had all of Jack's medical information, they were sent to an expert cardiologist for review.



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It was on Christmas Day when Best Doctors' medical director personally sent Bonnie the comprehensive Best Doctors report, because Jack's surgery was scheduled for two days later. In the report, the expert recommended against the additional procedure. “Because of the timing, everyone was so willing to work over the holidays, and that allowed us to sit down with our parents and have a conversation with them about their health,” Bonnie said. Jack decided to cancel the procedure.

Best Doctors found a new local cardiologist from their expert database, and Jack was scheduled for a less invasive valve replacement surgery, called TAVR (Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement), rather than an open heart surgery. Bonnie describes Jack's complete transformation. “Before, he had shortness of breath, weakness, balance issues and no strength. He had the procedure, and everything went well. He went home the next day.”

“I don't know how to put Best Doctors' overall concern and sincerity of caring into words,” Bonnie said. After a check-in with his cardiologist, he was doing great.

“In the end, it was so rewarding and my brothers and I are so happy that we could be advocates for our parents and help them make the right decision with all the necessary information. He was doing the right thing for the right reasons, and he felt confident he was getting the best care and doing the best thing for him. I truly believe the recommendation saved my dad's life,” she said.



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