

# From Heart Attack to Senior Olympics

How cardiac rehab helped one man's heart beat stronger than ever before



It was a typical day for Darrell Douglas on Aug. 17, 2014. He was enjoying a few games of basketball at his local church when suddenly he fell face first to the ground. He was experiencing a heart attack. Onlookers immediately started CPR, then he was transported via EMS to the hospital where he subsequently had quadruple bypass heart surgery.

"I had just retired and was more active than ever before playing golf and basketball," says Douglas. "It was one of those silent things I guess. I never would've thought."

After his surgery, Douglas began to see David Peterson, MD, of Western Carolina Cardiology. Peterson recommended he begin cardiac rehabilitation at Haywood Regional Health and Fitness Center (HRHFC).

The typical cardiac day for Douglas would consist of checking vitals such as blood pressure, oxygen levels, and heart rate and then begin exercising on a treadmill, elliptical or bike, depending on what is most comfortable for the patient.

"You were not a number on a treadmill and left alone. The attention to detail for each person's needs are a priority for them and easily noticeable," he says. "They made sure to not let me do too much too soon, and cause more damage to my heart."

He began the program slowly and ensured his heart rate stayed at the healthy level to gradually increase his stamina. Soon after, he started lifting light weights and stretching. After 36 sessions of cardiac rehab, he graduated with a certification, celebration, and lots of cow bell ringing.

A Heart Attack Occurs  
Every **43** Seconds

GOOD THING WE'RE CLOSE.



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— Darrell Douglas

“It felt good. Like you really accomplished something. They made it a big deal,” said Douglas.

After he graduated cardiac rehab, he began the STEP program at HRHFC. STEP is a physician referred supervised exercise program that starts with a physical therapy evaluation to ensure that you are ready to exercise. After his physical therapist cleared him to start, Douglas met with an exercise physiologist to develop his personal fitness plan. As part of the STEP program Douglas received full membership to the Health & Fitness center for 60 days, twice weekly small group training sessions with an exercise specialist, and nutrition education from a registered dietitian for \$60.

“I used to think I ate healthy, but realized I actually didn’t after meeting with Lauren the nutritionist. Now I stay with a diet that is no sodium and no cholesterol,” says Douglas.

Douglas now considers himself to be a better swimmer, stronger lifter and faster runner due to a 15-pound weight loss. He is now training for the Haywood County Senior Olympic Games in 2017. He strives to be active every day, and his typical workout routine consists of weight lifting, swimming laps, sprints and running.

He says that, without a doubt, he would recommend all the services he experienced at Haywood Regional.

“A big part of what I can do today is due to the programs and people at HRMC, and for that I am eternally grateful,” he says.

Cardiac Rehabilitation Week, Feb. 12-18, focuses attention on cardiac rehabilitation’s contribution to improving the health and physical performance of people at risk for heart disease as well as those who have been diagnosed with heart disease or dysfunction. Haywood Regional wants to honor, congratulate and thank Douglas for choosing us to care for him.

## ● Healthy Heart Recipe

### Black Bean Soup



You will love this Simple Cooking with Heart Mexican recipe because it's simple to make, it is heart healthy and budget friendly.

#### **Nutrition Information:**

Serving Size: 1 cup; 245 calories; 34mg sodium; 45g carbohydrates; 15g protein

#### **Ingredients**

- nonstick cooking spray
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 tbsp. garlic, jarred, minced
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 jalapeño, chopped
- 2 16-oz. canned, low-sodium black beans, undrained
- 1 15-oz. canned, no-salt-added, diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- chopped, fresh cilantro, (optional)

#### **Directions**

1. Spray large pot with cooking spray, over medium-high heat add onion and cook until translucent (5 minutes).
2. Add garlic, cumin and jalapeno and cook 1 minute more.
3. Add beans to pot and lightly mash with a potato masher or fork.
4. Add tomatoes and broth. Bring to a boil and reduce to medium heat, cover and simmer for 15 minutes.
5. Serve topped with chopped fresh cilantro (optional).