

A Survivor's Story

"I no longer sweat the small stuff" – Todd Tewksbury, Philadelphia, PA

On Monday, August 25th, 2014 Todd Tewksbury went out for a run after work on the Schuylkill River Trail in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He said that this was a typical exercise for him, nothing out of the ordinary to his usual day. Towards the end of his run, he collapsed along the trail. He was suffering from a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA). Luckily, a doctor and his wife were walking behind him at the time and began CPR immediately. They, and other outstanding Samaritans, performed CPR for 11 minutes before an AED was sought from a local public park and was used. Paramedics arrived to the scene shortly after and rushed Todd to hospital. Nearly three years later, Todd states he has almost made a full recovery. Todd had an intravenous ICD implanted and has not had any issues since. Unfortunately, since the event, Todd has experienced some atrial fibrillation, and his medication has not been successful treating the condition. However, he is due to undergo a second cardiac ablation this fall to correct it. Hopefully all will go well.

We asked Todd how this has affected him emotionally, financially, and physically; he said, "This has made me appreciate everything a lot more than I did before the cardiac event. It put a new perspective on everything. I no longer *sweat the small stuff*." He also shared, finalizing his story with us, "I am forever grateful for those who helped me that day on the trail, and for the people responsible for providing an AED to the nearby public park."



Todd (fifth from the right) and a group of friends at a local heart walk.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) claims the lives of around 360,000 people each year. With the combined use of CPR + AED, a victim's chance of survival can increase by five-fold.

Do you know where your nearest AED is located? Do you believe your local neighborhood, parks, or trails need more AED's? Please visit our campaign page at www.defibssavelives.org/usa to learn more about how you can help lead your community to becoming HEARTSafe.