One of the scariest moments of Joe’s life came in 2016 when he passed out at a Denver Broncos game while with his son.

Joe collapsed against his son and was shocked three times before being rushed to the hospital. That’s when he and his medical team began discussing LVAD therapy and the HeartMate 3™ LVAD. As a scientist, Joe was already familiar with LVADs, and he believed it was the logical next step.

A few weeks after the implant surgery, Joe was discharged from the hospital. More than two years have passed since he received his HeartMate 3 LVAD, and Joe could not be happier about how his life has improved. Golf is one of Joe’s loves, and today he can be found on the course several times a week.

“When I’m playing golf or doing other activities, I’m almost in disbelief that my life could change for the better so dramatically.”

He and his wife, Sandy, are enjoying travel and their four grandchildren. Joe also enjoys watercolor painting and has been commissioned for paintings by friends and neighbors. He’s currently working on a painting of a friend’s motorcycle. “It’s a challenge to get the chrome to look shiny with watercolors,” he said, but he’s enjoying the challenge.

Joe is, to the best of his knowledge, the first person in his community to be on LVAD support. He’s grateful to showcase the quality of life improvements an LVAD can bring to heart failure patients and their caregivers, and educate local health care providers about the therapy. In addition, Joe is looking forward to the publication of a letter he submitted to the Journal of the American College of Cardiology. The letter is for a new section of the Journal that focuses on sharing the patient experience. “I feel like I have an obligation to let others know about my situation and the effectiveness of this system. Sandy and I say it’s like paying it forward.”

The HeartMate 3 LVAD was recently approved by the FDA for the indication of destination therapy for patients who are not eligible to receive a heart transplant. This means that the sickest heart failure patients, a population estimated to be 50,000 – 100,000 who have few alternatives for treating their disease, can have the potential to be treated with the HeartMate 3 LVAD.1
ReBirthday Celebrations
LUCKY #8 FOR REISS

Harmony. Balance. Power. These are just a few of the meanings that have been attributed to why some believe the number eight is so lucky, but for one HeartMate™ LVAD Ambassador, the number eight has a much simpler interpretation: Gratitude.

On September 20th, HeartMate II™ LVAD recipient Reiss celebrated his eighth ReBirthday with friends and his beloved Cathie. A night out on the town was a fitting way to ring in his eighth year.

“Since my first 365 days with the HeartMate II LVAD, I’ve declared September 20th to be my personal ReBirthday because it marked such a significant change in my battle with heart failure,” said Reiss. “For me, the diagnosis of heart failure came with the realization that yes, in fact, he does have an LVAD. Because of his frame and the way he wears it, the LVAD isn’t immediately obvious.

“So what’s his secret for looking LVAD-Free? George wears a tactical compression shirt, which features four pockets on each side of the shirt, under the arms. He wears his batteries on each side in the front facing pockets and the controller in the other right-side pocket. At 6’1” tall, George finds carrying his batteries higher on his body close to his underarms suits his frame better.

“I find this way to be the most comfortable for my day to day, which includes working part-time, some travel, dinners out and spending time with my grandkids.”

I was on a downhill trajectory, but the HeartMate II LVAD put a stop to that downward trend and I feel like I came roaring back with a purpose and a vengeance.”

Reiss has been an active part of the HeartMate™ LVAD Ambassador program since 2012, supporting various awareness programs. In 2017, he was asked by the Journal of the American College of Cardiology to share his patient perspective in a series of articles and has been invited to speak at an Advanced Heart Failure Symposium in Virginia. And as a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, he volunteers to assist other vets.

“I’ve declared September 20th to be my personal ReBirthday because it marked such a significant change in my battle with heart failure.”

In short, life with the HeartMate II LVAD has given Reiss more opportunities to share his personal story and to help in ways which make him profoundly grateful.

Added Reiss, “I like to say that attitude is everything, and I am of the attitude that I am blessed to be where I am, and doing what I’m doing.”

Share Your Story
HOW DID YOU FIRST LEARN ABOUT LVAD THERAPY?

For some of you, learning about and receiving your LVAD was not a straightforward process for various reasons. Maybe you were told nothing else could be done to help you, or you live in an area where use of LVAD therapy is uncommon, or perhaps provider knowledge of current LVAD therapy success is limited, etc.

We would like to hear from you about how you learned about and ultimately received a HeartMate LVAD. Your story can help us broaden the awareness of LVAD therapy, potentially helping many more people just like you.

Please share your story with us!

**Individual Experience:** Each testimonial relates an account of an individual’s response to the treatment. The patient’s account is genuine, typical and documented. However, it does not provide any indication, guide, warranty or guarantee as to the response other persons may have to the treatment. Responses to the treatment discussed can and do vary and are specific to the individual patient.

**Important Safety Information**

**Rx Only**

**Brief Summary:** Prior to using these devices, please review the Instructions For Use for a complete listing of indications, contraindications, warnings, precautions, potential adverse events and directions for use.

**HeartMate 3 LVAS Indications:** The HeartMate 3 Left Ventricular Assist System is indicated for providing short- and long-term mechanical circulatory support (e.g., as bridge to transplant or myocardial recovery, or destination therapy) in patients with advanced refractory left ventricular heart failure.

**HeartMate II LVAS Indications:** The HeartMate II Left Ventricular Assist System is indicated for use as a “bridge to transplantation” for cardiac transplant candidates who are at risk of imminent death from non-reversible left ventricle failure. It is also indicated for use in patients with New York Heart Association (NYHA) Class IIIB or IV end-stage left ventricular failure, who have received optimal medical therapy for at least 45 of the last 60 days, and who are not candidates for cardiac transplantation. The HeartMate II Left Ventricular Assist System is intended for use both inside and outside of the hospital, or for transportation of Left Ventricular Assist Device patients via ground ambulance, airplane, or helicopter.

**HeartMate 3 and HeartMate II LVAS Contraindications:** The HeartMate 3 and HeartMate II Left Ventricular Assist Systems are contraindicated for patients who are allergic to, or who cannot tolerate, anticoagulation therapy.

**HeartMate 3 and HeartMate II LVAS Adverse Events:** Adverse events that may be associated with the use of the HeartMate 3 or HeartMate II Left Ventricular Assist System include, but are not limited to those listed below: death, bleeding, cardiac arrhythmia, localized infection, right heart failure, respiratory failure, device malfunctions, driveline infection, renal dysfunction, sepsis, stroke, other neurological event (not stroke-related), hepatic dysfunction, psychiatric episode, venous thromboembolism, hypertension, arterial non-central nervous system (CNS), thromboembolism, pericardial fluid collection, pump pocket or pseudo pump pocket infection, myocardial infarction, wound dehiscence, hemolysis (not associated with suspected device thrombosis) and pump thrombosis.

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