



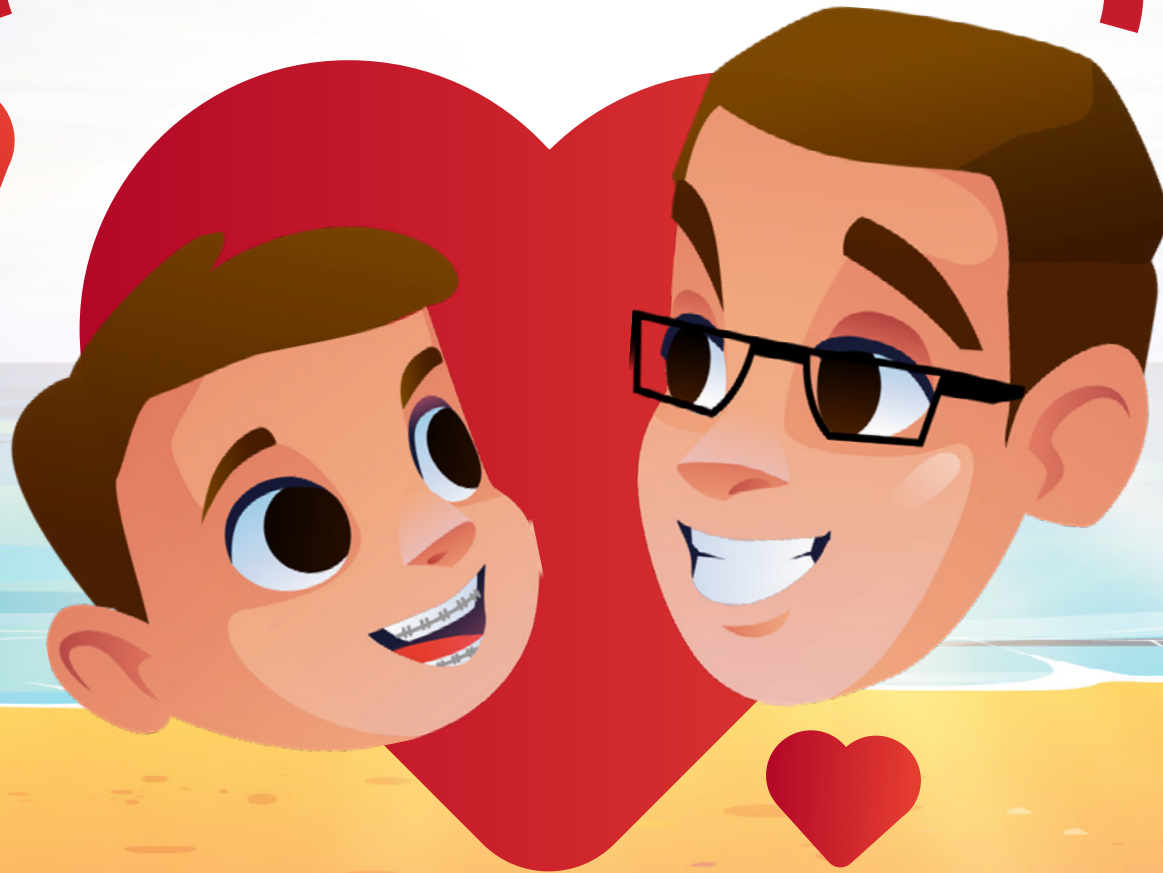
American Heart Association.

**KIDS
HEART
CHALLENGE™**

**AMERICAN
HEART
CHALLENGE™**

DAD'S HEART

AN AT-THE-TIME BIOGRAPHY





**This book is dedicated
to MY AMAZING FATHER.
He overcame this
terrible event so quickly.**

**I hope this book helps and answers
many questions you might have about
your loved one.**

**I learned a lot of new words during
my father's experience and I will help
you understand the words you may
also hear. They will be in red font
color and you can look at page 15 to
see a longer explanation.**

– Brian Berger

Hi my name is Brian.
Unfortunately, my dad
had a **heart attack** a
few months ago. He is
doing very well now but
I thought writing about
my experiences might be
helpful for other kids.

I will explain our story
so other children can
understand what is
happening to someone
they love.





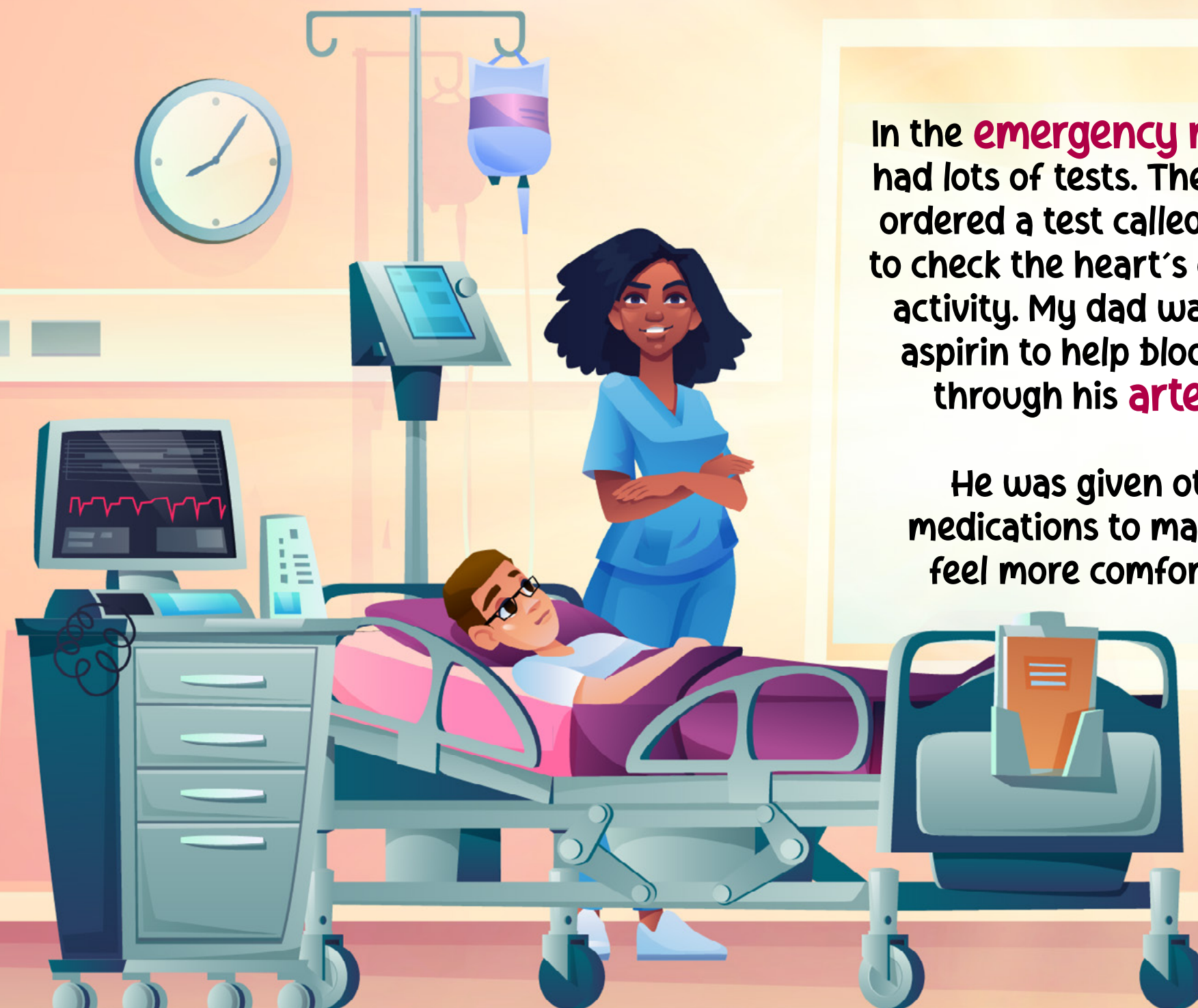
I always knew my dad had a caring heart. He made me feel better when I was down and told me everything would be fine.

I never imagined anything could be wrong with his heart. He would walk up big hills, like we did in San Francisco during my spring break. He would go to the gym to exercise. He ate healthy foods, including lots of fruits and vegetables.

Everything changed on April 8. While my dad was at the gym, he began to not feel well. He had pain in his chest and an upset stomach. He returned home and called my mom.

She came home quickly. My mom is a doctor, and she was worried that he might be having **angina**. Angina is when there is chest pain from the heart not getting enough blood. He was taken to the nearest hospital.





In the **emergency room**, he had lots of tests. The doctors ordered a test called an **EKG** to check the heart's electrical activity. My dad was given aspirin to help blood flow through his **arteries**.

He was given other medications to make him feel more comfortable.

Quickly, many special heart doctors called **cardiologists** arrived to see my dad. They determined that he was having a heart attack. This means that there was a **blockage** in one or more of the **coronary** arteries that might permanently hurt the heart muscle.

The doctors and nurses then took my dad to another part of the hospital. It was called the **Catheterization Lab**.



The catheterization lab is a room with lots of equipment, cameras and tubes. Within a few minutes, the doctors looked inside my dad's **blood vessels** by using these cameras.

The doctors saw a few blockages in my dad's heart. They inserted stents, which are tubes that open blocked blood vessels. My dad finally felt comfortable. The pain went away once the stent was placed.





When I first heard about this, I was terrified. I didn't know what to do because I didn't understand what would happen. The first thing I did was call my best friends to talk about my fears.

After I talked with my friends, I wanted to learn about what happened to my dad. I found some articles to read. I felt so much better when I called my dad, and he said he would be all right.

The next day, my dad was taken to another part of the hospital called the **Coronary Care Unit**.

There are rooms designed for heart patients, and there are lots of nurses around all the time. My dad needed to stay there for a few days to make sure his heart was still beating strong.

After that unit, my dad went to a regular heart floor in the hospital. He was starting to walk and get his strength back. He was adjusting to the new medication he would need to take every day.



At last, my dad came home. I was so happy to see him. He was a bit more tired than before the heart attack, but he looked almost the same. He stayed home from work for a few days but then returned to his job.

To become even stronger, my dad joined a **cardiac rehabilitation program** near our house. Three times a week, he exercised alongside a nurse who closely watched his **blood pressure** and **heart rate**. My dad also learned how to safely exercise on his own.





My dad is doing really well now. He still needs to take medication every day. He is back to regular exercise and continues to eat healthy foods.

After this happened to my dad, I knew that I wanted to help stop **heart disease**. Heart disease is very common in the United States. Every year, about 805,000 people in the U.S. have a heart attack.

A few months after my dad's heart attack, I decided to become involved with the American Heart Association. It is a large organization that helps to fight heart disease. They raise money for research and help educate people about ways to stop this condition.

I joined the local Heart Walk in my area. I formed a team of friends and family, and we collected over \$5,000. We walked a few miles on a beautiful Sunday by the beach where I live. My dad walked the entire course without any problems.

My dad still has the best heart!



About the Author

Hi, my name is Brian Berger. I am the author of this book. Here is some information about me. When my father had his heart attack, I was 12 years old and in the 6th grade. We had just returned from a family trip to San Francisco, a memory that still feels fresh. That event changed our lives, but it also set me on a path to making a difference.

At 12, my favorite snack was Oreos. I always dreamed of having a dog, and now I'm lucky enough to have one! I loved spending time outdoors with friends, and playing video games on my Nintendo Switch or Xbox was a go-to activity. Stranger Things was my favorite show—it's still a nostalgic favorite.

Making an Impact with the AHA

Since my dad's heart attack, I have gotten even more involved with the American Heart Association. At the time that I wrote this book, I had raised \$5,000. Since then, I've raised over \$140,000 for heart health initiatives and played a key role in launching CPR education programs within Long Island school districts. Additionally, I've interned and volunteered at various AHA offices and events, striving to create a healthier future for all.

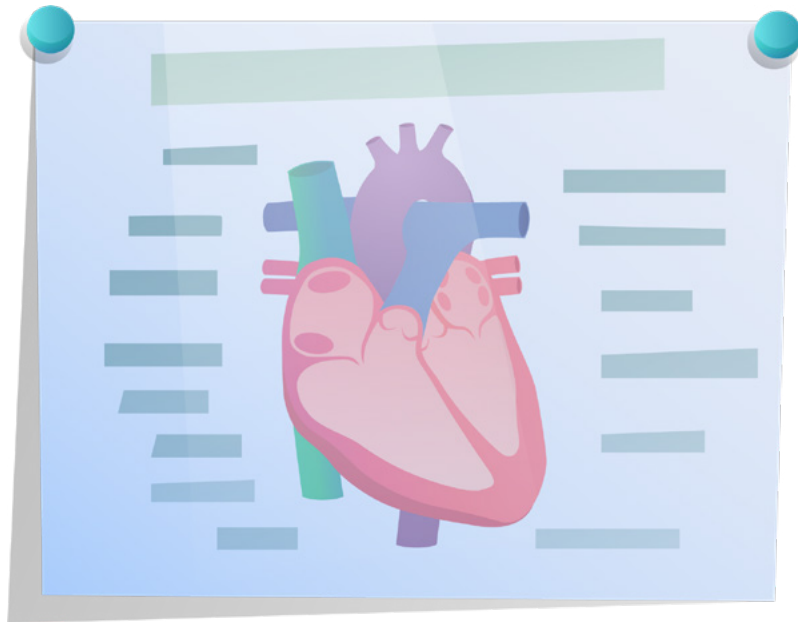


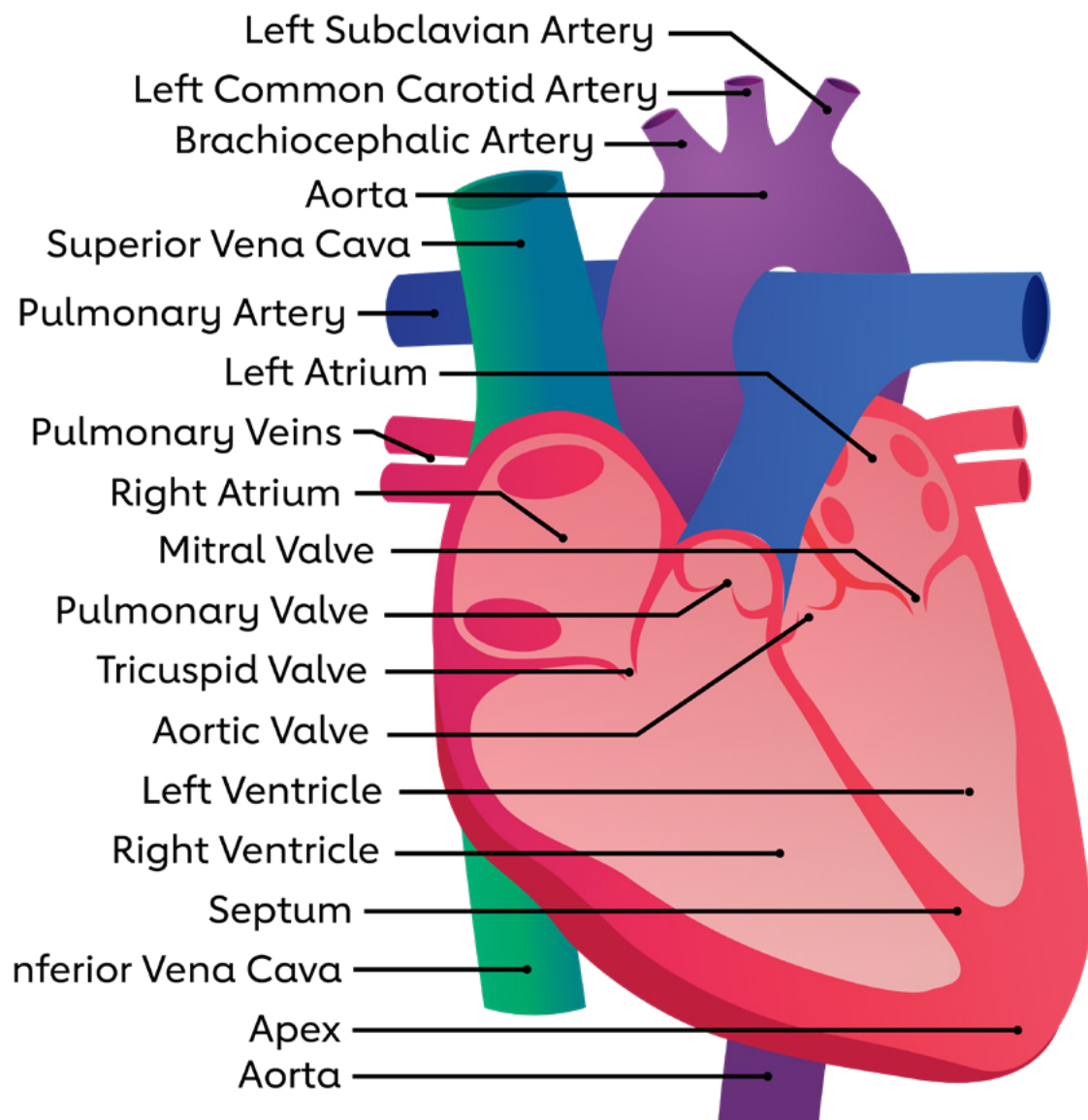


Glossary:

- **Angina** – Chest pain
- **Arteries** – Blood vessels that carry blood from your heart to all the cells in your body
- **Blockage** – When blood flow to the heart muscle is reduced or blocked
- **Blood pressure** – The force of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries
- **Blood vessels** – The network of vessels that move blood through the body
- **Cardiac rehabilitation program** – A program that helps people improve their heart health after a heart problem
- **Cardiologist** – A special doctor for the heart
- **Catheterization lab** – A special hospital room for people with urgent heart problems
- **Coronary** – Describes the blood vessels around the heart
- **Coronary Care Unit** – A special section of the hospital that takes care of people with heart problems
- **EKG** – A test that measures the electrical activity of the heart
- **Emergency room** – An area of the hospital that treats people who need care right away
- **Heart attack** – When blood flow to the heart muscle is reduced or blocked
- **Heart disease** – Harmful conditions of the heart
- **Heart rate** – The number of times your heart beats per minute

DAD'S HEART ACTIVITY PAGES





Facts:

- In the United States, about 20.5 million people older than 19 years old have heart disease.¹
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women.²
- In the United States someone has a heart attack approximately every 40 seconds.³
- Risk factors include diabetes, obesity, physical inactivity, poor diet, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking.⁴

¹ <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/epdf/10.1161/CIR.0000000000001209>
 "In 2021, 3,464,231 resident deaths were registered in the United States, which exceeds the 2020 figure by 80,502 deaths. Coronary heart disease accounted for 375,476 of the total 931,578 cardiovascular disease deaths in 2021"
 "On the basis of data from NHANES 2017 to 2020, an estimated 20.5 million Americans ≥20 years of age have CHD (Table 21-1)."

² <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/abs/10.1161/CIR.0000000000001209>

³ "Approximately every 40 seconds, an American will have an MI (AHA computation based on incidence data from the ARIC study of the NHLBI4)." <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/epdf/10.1161/CIR.0000000000001209>

⁴ <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/epdf/10.1161/CIR.0000000000001209> https://www.heart.org/-/media/PHD-Files-2/Science-News/2/2024-Heart-and-Stroke-Stat-Update/2024-Statistics-At-A-Glance-final_2024.pdf?sc_lang=en&hash=D0A208F50F8591AEED0E31BE77265505



Questions to ask my family:

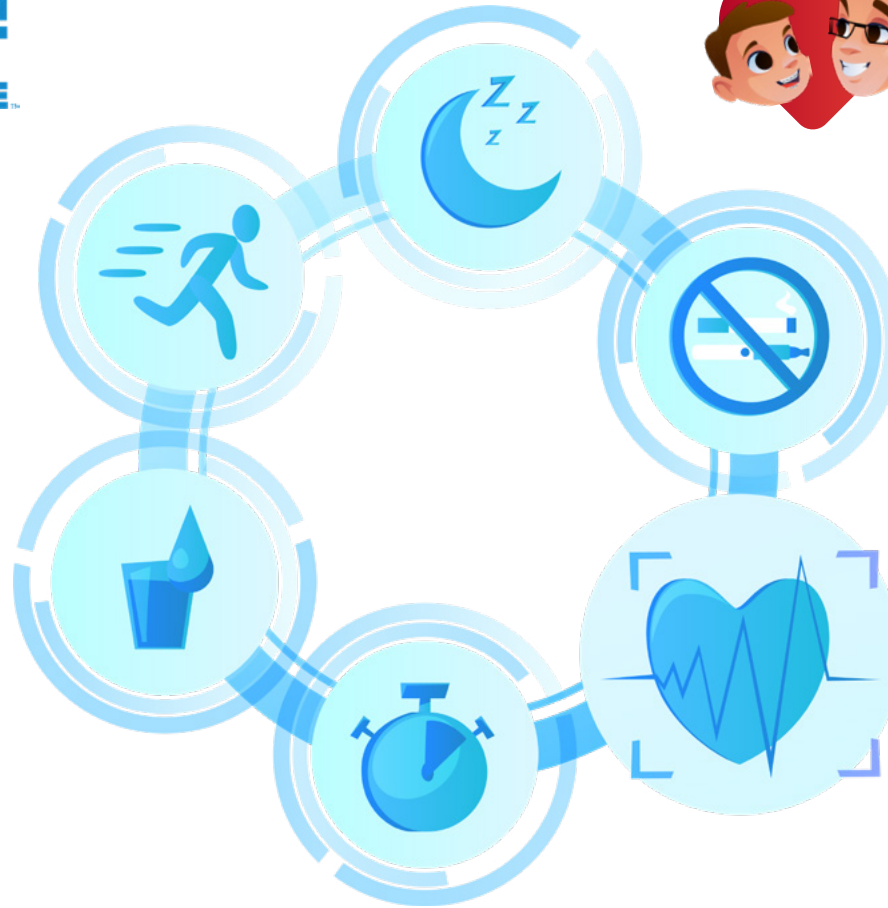
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My Sketches:

Case No.	Case Name	Case Address	Case City	Case State	Case Zip	Case Phone	Case Email	Case Date	Case Status	Case Notes
1	John Doe	123 Main St	New York	NY	10001	212-555-1234	john.doe@example.com	2023-10-27	Open	Initial contact, no response yet.
2	Jane Smith	456 Elm St	Los Angeles	CA	90001	310-555-5678	jane.smith@example.com	2023-10-28	Open	Received email, waiting for call.
3	Robert Johnson	789 Oak St	Chicago	IL	60601	312-555-9012	robert.johnson@example.com	2023-10-29	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
4	Maria Garcia	101 Pine St	San Antonio	TX	78201	214-555-3456	maria.garcia@example.com	2023-10-30	Open	Received call, no response yet.
5	David Lee	202 Birch St	Phoenix	AZ	85001	602-555-7890	david.lee@example.com	2023-10-31	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
6	Emily White	303 Cedar St	San Diego	CA	92101	619-555-2345	emily.white@example.com	2023-11-01	Open	Received email, waiting for call.
7	Michael Brown	404 Maple St	San Jose	CA	95101	408-555-6789	michael.brown@example.com	2023-11-02	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
8	Sarah Davis	505 Walnut St	San Francisco	CA	94101	415-555-0123	sarah.davis@example.com	2023-11-03	Open	Received call, no response yet.
9	James Wilson	606 Elm St	Seattle	WA	98101	206-555-4567	james.wilson@example.com	2023-11-04	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
10	Alice Taylor	707 Oak St	Portland	OR	97201	503-555-8901	alice.taylor@example.com	2023-11-05	Open	Received email, waiting for call.
11	Benjamin Clark	808 Pine St	Denver	CO	80201	303-555-2345	benjamin.clark@example.com	2023-11-06	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
12	Olivia Lewis	909 Cedar St	San Diego	CA	92101	619-555-6789	olivia.lewis@example.com	2023-11-07	Open	Received call, no response yet.
13	Ethan Hall	1010 Maple St	San Jose	CA	95101	408-555-0123	ethan.hall@example.com	2023-11-08	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
14	Ava King	1111 Walnut St	San Francisco	CA	94101	415-555-4567	ava.king@example.com	2023-11-09	Open	Received email, waiting for call.
15	Noah Scott	1212 Elm St	Seattle	WA	98101	206-555-8901	noah.scott@example.com	2023-11-10	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
16	Isabella Adams	1313 Oak St	Portland	OR	97201	503-555-2345	isabella.adams@example.com	2023-11-11	Open	Received call, no response yet.
17	Liam Baker	1414 Pine St	Denver	CO	80201	303-555-6789	liam.baker@example.com	2023-11-12	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
18	Mia Green	1515 Cedar St	San Diego	CA	92101	619-555-0123	mia.green@example.com	2023-11-13	Open	Received email, waiting for call.
19	Lucas Miller	1616 Maple St	San Jose	CA	95101	408-555-4567	lucas.miller@example.com	2023-11-14	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
20	Charlotte Wilson	1717 Walnut St	San Francisco	CA	94101	415-555-8901	charlotte.wilson@example.com	2023-11-15	Open	Received call, no response yet.
21	Henry Moore	1818 Elm St	Seattle	WA	98101	206-555-2345	henry.moore@example.com	2023-11-16	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
22	Abigail Taylor	1919 Oak St	Portland	OR	97201	503-555-6789	abigail.taylor@example.com	2023-11-17	Open	Received email, waiting for call.
23	Isaac Clark	2020 Pine St	Denver	CO	80201	303-555-0123	isaac.clark@example.com	2023-11-18	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
24	Grace Lewis	2121 Cedar St	San Diego	CA	92101	619-555-4567	grace.lewis@example.com	2023-11-19	Open	Received call, no response yet.
25	Jack Hall	2222 Maple St	San Jose	CA	95101	408-555-8901	jack.hall@example.com	2023-11-20	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
26	Lily King	2323 Walnut St	San Francisco	CA	94101	415-555-2345	lily.king@example.com	2023-11-21	Open	Received email, waiting for call.
27	Leo Scott	2424 Elm St	Seattle	WA	98101	206-555-6789	leo.scott@example.com	2023-11-22	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
28	Sophia Adams	2525 Oak St	Portland	OR	97201	503-555-0123	sophia.adams@example.com	2023-11-23	Open	Received call, no response yet.
29	William Baker	2626 Pine St	Denver	CO	80201	303-555-4567	william.baker@example.com	2023-11-24	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
30	Chloe Green	2727 Cedar St	San Diego	CA	92101	619-555-8901	chloe.green@example.com	2023-11-25	Open	Received email, waiting for call.
31	Benjamin Miller	2828 Maple St	San Jose	CA	95101	408-555-2345	benjamin.miller@example.com	2023-11-26	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
32	Victoria Wilson	2929 Walnut St	San Francisco	CA	94101	415-555-6789	victoria.wilson@example.com	2023-11-27	Open	Received call, no response yet.
33	Samuel Moore	3030 Elm St	Seattle	WA	98101	206-555-0123	samuel.moore@example.com	2023-11-28	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
34	Madison Taylor	3131 Oak St	Portland	OR	97201	503-555-4567	madison.taylor@example.com	2023-11-29	Open	Received email, waiting for call.
35	Christopher Clark	3232 Pine St	Denver	CO	80201	303-555-8901	christopher.clark@example.com	2023-11-30	Open	Call scheduled for next week.
36	Skylar Lewis	3333 Cedar St	San Diego	CA	92101	619-555-2345	skylar.lewis@example.com	2023-12-01	Open	Received call, no response yet.

Heart Healthy Lifestyle:

- Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
- Spend less time sitting and exercise more¹



- Don't smoke
- Be less stressed
- Not too much sugar

¹ <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/aha-recs-for-physical-activity-in-adults>

My Thoughts: _____
