



Survivor story



Adrian Hall, 36, Nottinghamshire

Standing holding his young daughter Esme in his arms on a beautiful spring day in March 2012, in the idyllic setting of Sherwood Forest, proud dad Adrian Hall couldn't look happier or healthier in this perfect family picture.

Scarcely could 36-year-old Adrian have imagined less than 24 hours after his wife Taryn had captured this precious moment, their world would be turned completely upside down. And Esme, along with the couple's other young daughter,

Seren, would be in a hospital waiting room as Taryn was being given the horrendous news he had just a 5% chance of pulling through.



Without any warning, as super-fit Adrian headed back to his family's cabin at Center Parcs after a scenic bike ride, he collapsed with a sudden cardiac arrest.

A bystander reacted immediately, administering CPR before the park's doctor arrived on the scene with an AED (automated external defibrillator) to shock his heart back into rhythm. As paramedics arrived on the scene the clothes Adrian is wearing in this picture were ripped from his lifeless body as the battle to save his life continued.

“I would never have believed this would happen to me,” says Adrian. “It just never even crossed my mind. I had always been very fit and active, I played football at semi-pro level and playing it was my absolute passion.

“I never had any warning signs that day I just collapsed and that was it. I’d played a full 90 minutes of football only a few days before and been completely fine. You can see in the picture, we were just enjoying a lovely family holiday.”

In total, in the ambulance and inside the hospital, Adrian’s heart was shocked 14 times. He was then given therapeutic hypothermia for 48 hours, where his body was chilled to avoid permanent damage to his brain and other organs. Meanwhile doctors told Taryn to expect the worst.

‘I would never have believed this would happen to me’

“It really didn’t look good at one point and the doctor’s had told Taryn there was only a 5% chance of me making that, and that even if I did I would be brain damaged.

“It must have been so awful for her. She was a tower of strength and in a way she went through way more than I did. I was unconscious throughout most of it but she was the one who had to look after me and deal with the horrendous situation that we all faced. But she kept the family together and I am so proud of her for that.”

Remarkably, Adrian began to pull through and regained consciousness. His astounding recovery continued and within a month he was released from hospital after having an implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) fitted in his chest.



Adrian’s story bears remarkable resemblance to that of Hearts & Goals ambassador, Fabrice Muamba, his collapse coming just two days before Fabrice’s own sudden cardiac arrest on the football pitch. Like Fabrice, Adrian was very fit and had no history of heart problems.

“My story parallels Fabrice’s in so many ways it is amazing,” Adrian continues.

“When I was in hospital and I regained consciousness I was quite confused and I kept asking what had happened to me. In the end Taryn posted a newspaper article with Fabrice’s story on it on the wall and just said ‘that is what has happened to you’.

“When I had recovered we sat down and read Fabrice’s biography together and we just couldn’t believe the similarities.”

Like Fabrice, Adrian, who played for Mansfield Town as a youngster, was given the devastating news he wouldn't be able to play football again. But he has now joined up to Hearts & Goals to raise funds for defibrillators in communities.

"It was devastating to be honest," said Adrian. "Football has always been a huge part of my life and it was awful to learn I couldn't play again.



"But I am determined to turn it into a positive and that is what I am doing.

"It has given me a huge appreciation for the issue of sudden cardiac arrest but also for the importance of defibrillators in communities because there is no doubt I owe my life to one.

"If it wasn't for the early intervention of a bystander and an AED which was used on me I wouldn't have made it and that picture could well have been the last one ever taken of me.

"Hearts & Goals really struck a chord with me. It's something I have become passionate about and it really frustrates me that more people don't know CPR and that we don't have these devices in communities.

"I am incredibly lucky. Just like Fabrice so much happened that day that helped keep me alive."

***'I'm incredibly lucky.
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intervention I wouldn't
be here'***

Following his amazing recovery, for Adrian and his young family, life has continued almost completely unchanged. But moments like the one captured in that now poignant picture with little Esme, are even more precious.

"It does change your outlook on life. I think you look at everything and realise just how quickly things can change. My relationship with my family was already fantastic but it has just been galvanised now. We are so close and I value every moment I spend with them.

"Still now I take a minute every day to remember just how lucky I am to be alive. Every minute I spend on this earth is almost like stolen time now, because really I shouldn't be here. I'm going to make the most of everything, even more than I did before.

"I want to do something positive now and I am determined to help place AEDs in communities so that more people are protected and have the same chance I did."

Adrian is now fundraising for Hearts & Goals.