

Health

The advice you need

From the heart

My pain wasn't a pulled muscle after all...

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Walking up the stairs, I felt a twinge in my chest. It was June 2017 and my son Wills had been born six weeks earlier.

I was still getting used to life with him and my daughter Olivia, 3.

I kept feeling chest pain while pushing the buggy, too. 'I must've pulled a muscle,' I said to my husband Rich, then 37.

With him busy travelling with work, I was rushed off my feet.

Eventually, I confided in a friend about my pains.

'You need to see a doctor. That's not normal,' she warned.

But with Rich still away, I couldn't just leave the kids.

Waiting for him to get back later that day, I told him I was popping out.

I didn't want him to worry.

I headed to A&E and was given an ECG and chest X-rays, but they found nothing.

I went home, feeling relieved.

But the twinges wouldn't go away.

'Use my private healthcare,' Rich urged, when I confessed all.

Seeing a cardiologist, I was sent for a CT scan.

I waited calmly, alone, for the results.

Then...

'There's a tear in your artery,' the cardiologist said.

True-life
**PATIENT
CASEBOOK**



Pains started soon after I had Wills

I had a condition called spontaneous coronary artery dissection (SCAD).

It is the most common cause of acute coronary syndrome in young females without coronary artery disease.

It occurs most often in the final three months of a pregnancy or during the early post-partum period.

I needed surgery straightaway to have a stent fitted.

A wire mesh tube would be used to act like a scaffold to help keep my artery open.

Driving home in a daze, I prepared to see my kids.

Packed a bag, and hugged them, not knowing if I'd see them again.

I was awake for surgery, under local anaesthetic, so the surgeons could see more clearly if something was going wrong.

I tried to stay calm as the surgeons started the keyhole surgery.

Then, suddenly, my chest spasmed, and I needed to be sedated. Thankfully, coming

round, I was told that the operation was a success.

But my chest was agony. Physical recovery took six months and then I had to

face up to my mental scars.

I was once a keen runner but after my op I barely ever exercised as I was so worried.

I knew I needed to leave my stressful marketing job.

So, in 2018, I set up my business, training other women to teach modern antenatal classes to expectant parents.

I loved helping them get ready for their new arrivals.

Now, it's five years after my surgery.

My business is successful, and Olivia, 8, and Wills, 5, are doing great.

Plus, I've even started running again.

I do worry. But I can't stop what happened from letting me live my life.

More info

To find out more about Victoria's training or classes, visit www.ourbabyclub.com

Turn over for more health



Happy and healthy with my fab family