

Thanks to Brain Surgery, Riding Days are Not Over

Wilma Herron was shopping at a nearby Target store early last March when it hit her. "I was looking around, but I didn't know where I was."

Her husband, a truck driver, happened to call Wilma on her cell phone from Pennsylvania, where he was making a delivery. "She answered the phone and had no idea where she was," says Dick Herron. Fortunately, with the help of their daughter who lives nearby, they were able to locate Wilma at the Target store.

Pictured here is Wilma Herron (left) with her husband, Dick.



She was taken immediately to the local emergency room. "They thought I had a stroke or a TIA," says Wilma. She was released six days later to her Elyria home.

"But I still didn't feel right," says Wilma, 74. "I slept on the couch. I didn't eat right. I just wasn't with it." "She experienced more confusion, declining thinking and speech, and was getting weaker. "I was in a continuous decline."

Then, during a visit to her primary care physician, Wilma couldn't speak. "It was like she had marbles in her mouth," says Dick. Her doctor ordered a special CT to examine how blood moves around and into the brain. He was concerned with the results.

"That's when I took charge," says Dick. "I wanted her to go to a hospital where they had a specialty in neurology. That's why I selected Lakewood Hospital." Wilma was referred to **Muhammad Shazam Hussain, MD**, of the Cleveland Clinic Neurological Institute at Lakewood Hospital.

"I reviewed the angiogram," says Dr. Hussain,

"and it was one of the worst dural fistulas I had ever seen." A dural fistula is an abnormal passage-way in which blood bypasses the normal route through the capillaries and flows directly from an artery into a vein, causing fluid and swelling on the brain. Wilma was immediately admitted to Lakewood Hospital.

As a part of the Cleveland Clinic Neurological Institute at Lakewood Hospital, Dr. Hussain consulted with other leading neurosurgeons and interventional neuroradiologists to determine the most effective approach to Wilma's treatment.

The first hurdle was a six-hour exploratory surgery to better define the intricate connections in the brain. "We were able to treat and slow down some of the abnormal blood flow at that time," says Dr. Hussain.

One week later Wilma underwent a 10-hour surgery to correct the malformations. Her improvement began immediately.

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There was a setback one week later because of pooling blood in the brain. Wilma was transferred to Cleveland Clinic where **Shaye Moskowitz, MD**, performed the surgery. She was transferred back to the Skilled Nursing Unit at Lakewood for her follow-up care, and speech and occupational therapy.

"The therapists were wonderful, and they said my improvement was remarkable," says Wilma. "I feel fantastic now."

So well, in fact, that she and her husband are back to riding their motorcycles together again. Wilma and Dick are long-time members and current directors of the local chapter of the Gold Wing Road Riders. For many years they participated with more than 10,000 riders in the Teddy Bear Run for Cleveland Clinic pediatric patients.

"At our age we decided to get a three-wheeler, which gives us more stability and has extended our riding days for a while."

"I am so thrilled to be in this world," says Wilma. "Those people at Lakewood Hospital are the best. I love all of them."

"She is back to being her normal self now," adds Dick. "We are so happy for going to Lakewood Hospital and for their relationship with Cleveland Clinic. Dr. Hussain and his crew are terrific. It was a great experience."

For more information on the Cleveland Clinic Neurological Institute at Lakewood Hospital, call 216.529.7110 or go to lakewoodhospital.org/neuro