



How's Your Heart? | Tina Shorey

Psalm 51:10

Today I learned that I need open heart surgery.

The Doctors agree-everything is clogged, the heart is not working as it should.

I'm told the procedure has been done countless times before, and while there are risks, the end result is worth it.

The news is not devastating as I've had indications all along that something wasn't right. It just took me a long time to summon the courage to face what I already knew and seek the help I needed.

There is only one Surgeon who can perform this delicate procedure but I have read about Him and know that He is the best. He has even had a near (eternal) death experience Himself and is well aware of the challenges I face.

Symptoms

Perhaps you have need of open heart surgery as well. Below are a few of the symptoms.

1. Loss of Memory

While you might not associate memory with heart issues, this is a very telling symptom of heart disease. At first it is mild and goes almost unnoticed... forgetting to have worship in the morning, forgetting to place cares in the Great Physician's hands. Symptoms may gradually increase until daily doses of the Surgeon's prescriptions are reduced to weekly or even annual doses; and all the while the patient justifies actions or simply forgets the Surgeon altogether.

2. Hardening of the Arteries

This symptom may or may not be accompanied by symptom #1. Again, things start out slowly. Patient may notice a tendency to be critical of others, and possibly voicing this criticism to others as well. This may progress to a hardened heart-which while potentially fatal, can be reversed with intensive treatment-but only if the patient is willing. Hardened arteries manifest themselves by unwillingness to help others, putting others down, uttering unkind words, harboring unkind thoughts, and in general finding it difficult to tolerate differences in other people. Symptoms are often masked by a sense of self-righteousness and can escalate to using the Surgeon's *Guide to a Healthy Heart Manual* as a tool to introduce discouragement and hopelessness to others.

3. Denial

This symptom is often present in conjunction with other symptoms but may not be evident in all patients. While other symptoms may be quite pronounced, patients have a tendency to deny that anything is in fact wrong. Patients will frequently maintain or even increase activities to convince themselves and others that all is as it should be.

4. Anxiety

This symptom may or may not manifest itself in the patient. When it does, however, it is also a good indicator to the Surgeon that the patient may be ready for intense treatment as it shows that the patient has an understanding that something is wrong and may be more receptive to treatment.

5. Death

The most unwanted symptom, death comes when the patient has refused treatment and repelled all efforts from the Surgeon to provide a new heart. Death can only be determined by the Surgeon-no one else is qualified to know the true condition of the heart.

Treatment Options

There is only one treatment option for a patient with heart disease – go to the Surgeon and ask for open heart surgery. The procedure involves replacing the diseased heart with a new one. Care must be taken to follow the care plan outlined in the Surgeons Guide *to a Healthy Heart Manual*. While the patient may encounter many cheaper, easier, quicker treatments-they are not effective or true-and will actually lead to an increased failure of the heart.

It is often difficult to recognize the symptoms of heart disease in oneself and therefore it is essential to consult with the Great Physician on a daily basis both in conversation (prayer) and study of His *Guide to A Healthy Heart Manual* (Bible). Also of great benefit is joining a support group of other individuals who have recognized their need for a new heart (church).