

Mayo Clinic News Network

O07 Flu and Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS)

Intro: This is a story of beating the odds. It’s about a man who developed a potentially deadly complication of the flu called acute respiratory distress syndrome, or ARDS. He ended up in a medically induced coma on a respirator in an intensive care unit – a situation from which many don’t recover.

Video

Audio

TRT 2:30 Voice of Vivien Williams	For almost two months, a critical care unit was home to Shawn Krousey, but he doesn’t remember any of it.
Shawn Krousey	“I believe I was under for 45 days.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	Unconscious, on a ventilator to help him breathe after a case of the flu turned into a potentially deadly condition called ARDS.
Richard Oeckler, M.D., Ph.D. Mayo Clinic pulmonary and critical care	“Its an acronym for acute respiratory distress syndrome, which is a form of acute lung injury. In other words the tissue of the lung is injured by something.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	Mayo Clinic Dr. Richard Oeckler says that something could be a traumatic injury, a bacterial infection, or in this case a flu virus.
Richard Oeckler, M.D., Ph.D. Mayo Clinic pulmonary and critical care	“It sets off a big inflammatory reaction and that inflammatory reaction is really at the heart of ARDS.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	Here’s what happens: your lungs are made up of millions of tiny air sacs. They’re in constant contact with your blood stream, which carries oxygen throughout your body. Normally, barriers prevent water in your blood stream from flowing into your lungs. When ARDS strikes, barriers break and fluid fills your lungs.
Richard Oeckler, M.D., Ph.D. Mayo Clinic pulmonary and critical care	“That brisk inflammation response in your lung now can pass to the blood stream and throughout the body, so you can get a bad systemic response and

	that can lead to organ failure and death.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	Dr. Oeckler says close to 40-percent of all people who develop ARDS don't make it.
Shawn Krousey	“I thank my lucky stars now, I know that.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	Shawn's treatment included medication to target the underlying infection and a ventilator to support his lungs.
Jeff Rabatin, M.D. Mayo Clinic pulmonary and critical care	“Ventilators, or breathing machines, are really life saving because we're able to help him breathe while his lungs were healing.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	Dr. Jeff Rabatin heads the Respiratory Care Unit at Mayo Clinic. He says for many patients like Shawn, ARDS can be very tough. There was a time, Shawn says, when his family gathered because things looked grim.
Shawn Krousey Had ARDS	“They didn't expect me to live. I know how close I came to pushing up daisies.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	But Shawn did pull through. Every day he's getting stronger, healthier and ready to head home – back to life.
Shawn Krousey	“I'm just thankful to be here.”
	For Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams.

Anchor tag:

It's impossible to know who will develop ARDS. But Dr. Oeckler says your best defense against it is to get a flu shot every year. The vaccine is not a guarantee you won't get the flu, but if you do it will likely be mild and it will reduce your chances of developing ARDS.

For more information, visit our website at ... [STATIONS: Per the licensing agreement, please provide a link from your station's website to

<http://www.MayoClinic.org> or voice tag “MayoClinic.org” for more information.]