

Mayo Clinic Sesquicentennial – Collection of Stories

Live Long, Beat Strong

Intro: At age 14, life’s all about school, sports and hanging out with friends. But for the teen you’re about to meet, it’s also about enduring open heart surgery. Jack Long faced a major operation, but instead of fearing what might happen, he focused on helping other people.

Video

Audio

TRT 3:06 Voice of Vivien Williams	When hurricane Sandy slammed into New Jersey, the Long family braced for two storms. The water and winds that raged in their town and their fears about the health of 14-year-old Jack.
Michael Long Jack’s dad	“He needs surgery. We were like – you could have picked us up off the floor.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	Jack needed open heart surgery to repair a rare congenital heart defect called Ebstein’s Anomaly.
Jack Long	“Kind of scary.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	Even though Jack was born with the condition, he didn’t have symptoms until he was a teen. And only when he played sports.
Jack Long	“It was harder to breathe. I got tired a lot faster.”
Michael Long	“We know that doing surgery now prevents damage in the future.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	The surgery that helped Jack was performed by a specialized team at Mayo Clinic.
Ben Eidem, M.D. Mayo Clinic cardiologist	“Jack was born with a congenital heart defect called tricuspid valve dysplasia or Ebstein’s anomaly. That’s one of the four valves in the heart called the tricuspid valve that when his heart was forming as a fetus just didn’t form correctly. “
Voice of Vivien Williams	Dr. Ben Eidem says the tricuspid valve’s job is to allow blood flowing into the heart from the body to flow to the right ventricle where it’s pumped to the lungs for oxygen. If the tricuspid valve is leaky,

	blood can flow backwards, causing the heart to pump harder. Over time, the heart becomes enlarged and functions poorly.
Joseph Dearani, M.D. Mayo Clinic surgeon	“The idea with surgery is to try to halt that process.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	Surgeon Dr. Joseph Dearani performed Jack’s operation, called the cone procedure.
Voice of Vivien Williams	During the operation Dr. Dearani isolates the deformed leaflets of the tricuspid valve. He then reshapes them so they function properly.
	Jack’s surgery was a success. He’s back to playing soccer and catching waves. But his story doesn’t end there. Before his operation Jack decided to make a difference. With the help of family, friends and a teacher, he started a foundation.
Jack Long Had congenital heart defect	“Live long. Beat strong. To find a cure for any of the congenital heart defects so you can help kids, anybody, have a better life.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	He sold bracelets for two bucks. T-shirts for ten. His mom Karen remembers Jack asking...
Karen Long Jack’s mom	“Do you think we’ll break \$1,000.00? I said, yeah you can probably break a \$1,000.00.”
Jack Long	“I would count it every night and look to see how much, and, thought, like, we can actually make a difference. Help people.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	People, from Jack’s small coastal town that was ravaged by Hurricane Sandy, lined up to donate.
Karen Long Jack’s mom	“So many people dropping off checks and they’re not even living in their houses, you know, to support Jack.”
Voice of Vivien Williams	He raised well over \$1,000.00.
Jack Long	“It’s just about \$10,000.00.”
Joseph Dearani, M.D.	The thing about Jack’s story to me that is the most precious is that it wasn’t about him for Jack; it was about everybody else.”
Jack Long	I’m just happy that we could help not just me get through, but help everyone else.”
	For Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m Vivien Williams.

Anchor tag:

Jack's doctors say he, like all people with congenital heart defects, will need lifetime follow up.

The money from Jack's foundation is for pediatric congenital heart defect research at Mayo Clinic. If you're interested in donating, go to

www.livelongbeatstrong.com

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