

Mayo Clinic News Network

Title: Wyatt's Long Ride Back from CO Poisoning / Date Jan. 2016

Intro: Winter is the time of year when cases of carbon monoxide poisoning rise, especially in colder climates. Homes are buttoned up tight as people try to stay warm. But, the invisible, odorless gas can strike in any season or any region and claims about 500 lives each year. A young motocross rider named Wyatt was one of the lucky ones. Here's Dennis Doua for the Mayo Clinic News Network.

Video

Audio

Total running time [4:22]	/// VIDEO
Wyatt Krampitz speaking	"When the gate drops, it just tells me I've got to get out front and I've got to lead. It just exhilarates me. It's my favorite thing to do."
Dennis Doua speaking	Motocross rider Wyatt Krampitz says, in many ways, he grew up on the racetrack.
Wyatt Krampitz speaking	"I've been riding since I was a little boy. I started racing when I was 10 years old."
Dennis Doua speaking	Wyatt is very good at what he does, with so many winner's cups and trophies that they've overflowed into the family's mechanic's shop. This past season he even qualified for a coveted spot at the Loretta Lynn National Amateur Championships near Nashville, Tennessee, which is also where his career nearly ended.
Paulette Krampitz speaking	"It was July 25th, 2015."
Dennis Doua speaking	His life nearly ended, as well.
Paulette Krampitz speaking	"I said, 'Wyatt' again and heard him moaning. He was breathing shallow."
Dennis Doua speaking	In his small camper on the racetrack campgrounds, Wyatt was overcome by the exhaust fumes of surrounding motorhomes and their generators.
TITLE: Paulette Krampitz Wyatt's Mother	"At this time, I didn't know what was going on. I did not know why he was not waking up."
Dennis Doua speaking	Paramedics immediately recognized Wyatt's symptoms as carbon monoxide poisoning and rushed him to the hospital. His mother Paulette recalls being given a very grim prognosis.
Paulette Krampitz speaking	"Wyatt wouldn't have a quality of life, he wouldn't function right. He would maybe not even wake up."

Dennis Douda speaking	After four days, Wyatt finally opened his eyes. A week and a half later, he was flown to Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.
Wyatt Krampitz speaking	“I don’t really remember much of it.”
Paulette Krampitz speaking	“When he first came home, every half hour it was, ‘What happened to me?’”
TITLE: William Brown, O.D., Ph.D. Mayo Clinic Ophthalmology	“Well, carbon monoxide basically removes oxygen from the body and puts parts of the body that are very oxygen-sensitive at risk.”
TITLE: Allen Brown, M.D. Mayo Clinic Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation	“So, you name a system in the brain and a performance, a physical or cognitive performance area, and any one of them can be affected.”
Dennis Douda speaking	The motocross rider, with lightning-quick reflexes, had suddenly lost his coordination and sense of balance. His short-term memory and cognitive functions were impaired. There would be a lot of hard work ahead, but Wyatt had help from a diverse team of therapists.
Dr. Allen Brown speaking	“You know, rehabilitation specialists that are focused on cognitive performance, thinking, memory, planning, executive function. But, there are others more focused on specific motor planning and relearning of motor function and mobility and specific aspects of sitting and balance and gait.”
Dennis Douda speaking	Brain rehabilitation specialist Dr. Allen Brown says, while there are some common impairments associated with carbon monoxide poisoning, therapy has to be tailored to each individual, because no two patients are exactly the same. Improving brain performance, he says, requires three key elements.
Dr. Allen Brown speaking	“These behaviors are task-specific. To sort of sustain these connections, it’s important to be repetitive, over and over and over and over.”
Therapist speaking	/// Therapy session
Dr. Allen Brown speaking	“Ideally it is willful. Someone needs to initiate it themselves with direction, commonly, certainly at the beginning.”
Dennis Douda speaking	Which also means -- a determined patient is more likely to succeed.
Wyatt Krampitz speaking	“I need to do whatever they tell me, what I have to do.”
Paulette Krampitz speaking	“You’ve got to understand motocrossers. They have a determination like no

	other.”
Dr. William Brown speaking	“Look at those jumps. That is incredible. I hit every jump there. That is incredible.”
Dennis Douda speaking	Dr. William Brown says Wyatt’s eyesight has improved dramatically since his first evaluation several months ago. Initially, there were concerns about his peripheral vision, ability to focus and dark spots in his field of view.
Dr. William Brown speaking	It can affect the blood vessels that feed the eye because the blood vessels are not carrying the oxygen that they need to. So, it can affect the retina. It can affect the optic nerve.”
Wyatt Krampitz speaking	“I want to get back out there.”
Dennis Douda speaking	While Wyatt’s passion was not affected by his accident, he is well aware his sport demands peak performance by all other systems.
Wyatt Krampitz speaking	“You have to be focused completely and know what you want to do out there.”
Paulette Krampitz speaking	“Where he’s come from and where he’s at now, we’re very thankful and very grateful. We see changes all the time and when you meet the therapists, they’ll even tell you, they’re very encouraged about his progress.”
Dennis Douda speaking	For the Mayo Clinic New Network, I’m Dennis Douda.

Anchor tag: The fumes of any fossil fuel not properly vented can cause problems. Natural gas, oil, wood, charcoal and engine exhausts are common sources in carbon monoxide poisoning. That’s why, in addition to homes, carbon monoxide detectors are often recommended in campers, cabins and ice fishing houses. Symptoms may include headache, dizziness, vomiting, chest pain and confusion.

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