

Physically fit 55-year-old collapses on treadmill

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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Abnormal fatigue only big sign something was wrong.

In mid-June of last year, Eric Evenson and his brother Tom slipped on backpacks and climbed Pike's Peak.

When they reached the summit—at 14,115 feet—Evenson had another Colorado fourteener to add to his list.

Throughout the summer of 2010, the local beekeeper kept fit while caring for his bees.

Still, he managed to squeeze in an attempt to climb 14,259-foot Long's Peak (which he's accomplished several times) with relatives in July. However high winds made the summit impossible.

That's why what happened early in the morning on Dec. 3 was so puzzling, even though there were a couple of warning signs.

"I was padding along on the treadmill at the Wellness Center and the next thing I knew, I was lying on the floor, staring at the ceiling, he said.

The last thing Evenson remembers is trying to run for five minutes and the clock on the treadmill showing 4:25.

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“I don’t remember getting dizzy and stumbling around.”

Wellness Center coordinator Tracy Geiken and another exerciser were at Evenson’s side immediately after he fell on the treadmill which “spit me out the end.”

Aside from a nasty scrape on his face, the 55-year-old seemed fine.

Nevertheless, he was placed in a wheelchair and wheeled to the emergency room where doctors could find nothing wrong. A stress test a few days later showed some abnormalities. Although Evenson said the doctor wasn’t overly concerned with the results, he prescribed a catheterization test at the Lincoln Heart Institute.

A catheter inserted into Evenson’s groin, that shot dye into four blood vessels feeding his heart, showed that one of the coronary arteries was 90% blocked.

“Only part of my heart was getting blood,” he said, explaining that the other arteries were compensating for the blocked artery.

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