

MAJOR TRAUMA DRAMA!

Twenty five year old Kevin could hardly wait to try out his 1968 Camero. He and his father had taken two years to turn that car into a real racing machine. They had spent over ten thousand dollars installing a lot of aftermarket products, including a supercharger, custom rims, racing tires, a two thousand dollar sound system, and a custom paint job with “racing stripes”. Now he wanted to see how fast his car could go!

Early one Saturday morning Kevin took his car to a long smooth stretch of empty road and put the pedal to the floor, he was thrilled with the car’s acceleration until the car hit a wet patch. The back tires of the car spun out, the car left the road, glanced off a palm tree and rolled over several times landing on its top against a back yard fence.

Fortunately for Kevin (Ahem: Maybe unfortunately!) George, a paramedic was coming off duty traveling in the opposite direction. He made a quick U-turn and rushed to help Kevin release his five point “racing” seat belt and crawl out of his car. George got very excited when he saw bruising over Kevin’s sternum; he had just heard a lecture about ruptured thoracic aortas, associated with high speed steering wheel injuries to the chest! Bruising over the sternum was a clue! He convinced the crying Kevin to lie flat, telling him he was severely injured. Kevin asked; “How is it that I am not in pain?” George answered; “Because you are in shock.” George ran to the nearby home and called his ambulance dispatcher; “Twenty five year old, single male, high speed steering wheel injury to the chest, bruising over his sternum, patient in shock, please notify the E.R.!”

Within minutes the ambulance arrived. Kevin was restrained on the backboard. When an I.V. was started and an oxygen mask was clamped on his face Kevin became paranoid and uncooperative, he began to struggle and fight; three paramedics had to hold him down. Getting vital signs was impossible. Meanwhile a full trauma code had been called at the nearest Trauma Center. Dr. Green, the trauma surgeon, had missed diagnosing a ruptured aorta several months before, so was determined not to fail this time! When the ambulance arrived, the trauma team was poised, ready to spring! Kevin was struggling and covered with sweat. When he saw the tubes and large needles he really went berserk. The anesthesiologist injected Pavulon to paralyze him and then shoved a breathing tube down his windpipe! More tubes and I.V.’s were inserted, blood was typed, chemistries were drawn and portable chest, pelvis, and neck X-rays were taken.

“His mediastinum looks widened”, Dr. Green exclaimed, “send him to angio, they are already on standby.” Kevin returned from angiography still in stable condition. Imagine Dr. Green’s surprise when all the tests were normal. Finally the endotracheal tube was removed. Immediately Kevin angrily addressed Dr. Green; “Why did you do all this to me? I told them I was not hurt!” “Of course you were hurt”, Dr. Green replied, “look at those bruises on your chest!” Kevin looked down at his chest and exclaimed: “THOSE ARE NOT BRUISES, THOSE ARE HICKEYS!”

Dr. Green finally moved far away to another state. He had become very tired of being called “Dr. Hickey”, or “Hickey Green” behind his back! He was also tired of being teased about his fifteen thousand dollar “HICKEY TRAUMA” workup!

NOTE: ALL the above names have been changed since those most involved wish to remain anonymous!