

Member Follows His Heart Back to Kaiser Permanente

Listen to your heart; it will tell you what you need. Mark Shapiro, a professional Violinist and Bassist since the age of 20, did this in 2014 when he returned to Kaiser Permanente after being insured by another provider. In 2012, Mark was waiting at his provider's emergency room for three hours to receive care for a heart attack. Two and a half hours into his wait, he called 911 from the hospital and pleaded for care. This negative experience could not compare to the positive care he had previously received from Kaiser Permanente.

The great care that Mark recalls dates back to the 1990s when he was briefly unemployed, and Kaiser Permanente offered an affordable health care plan. He only had the health care plan for six months, but it was long enough to redefine what medical excellence looked and felt like. So, in 2014, when the opportunity presented itself, Mark knew he wanted to return to Kaiser Permanente; and he did. Because Mark's life depends on good heart care, one might even say that his heart led him back to Kaiser Permanente.

Since returning to Kaiser Permanente, Mark has been a cardiac patient and has had heart procedures several times.

"If I felt Kaiser Permanente lagged anywhere behind the best cardiac experts in the world, I wouldn't be with Kaiser Permanente," he states.

But Mark's need for great cardiac care is not a unique story. According to the Center for Disease Control, in the United States, someone has a heart attack every 40 seconds, and about 1 in 5 heart attacks are silent. This is one of the many reasons why Kaiser Permanente, through its advanced [cardiac treatment](#), is committed to healing hearts and saving lives. Mark appreciates this commitment. He shared that having a heart attack is a life event that wakes you up and makes you say, "I really do need health insurance and good care."

Since returning to Kaiser Permanente eight years ago, Mark confidently says the organization has not let him down. At 65, Mark often visits his doctor, and he appreciates the medical records system. As someone who has received care for various health issues, knowing that all his medical records are available to any of his providers at any location gives him comfort. It is a unique system that Mark, as a former IT Engineer, calls "genius."

But it is not just the operations that Mark praises. He also applauds Kaiser Permanente's commitment to preventive care. Through health screenings and the proactiveness of his physician, Mark learned that he had prediabetes. He admits that diabetes is a health issue he did not think he was at risk for, so he never gave attention to the disease. He is glad his physician did. Thanks to his physician's attentiveness and persistence, Mark has managed his prediabetes through lifestyle changes and taking classes with the Kaiser Permanente [Center for Healthy Living](#). Not only is Mark managing his prediabetes, but he is thriving by practicing TM (Transcendental Meditation) regularly and has begun exercising daily.

Mark does not know how many times Kaiser Permanente has saved his life or prevented a major health issue, but he knows he is grateful for his care. When asked what he would want others to know about the organization, he stated, "if you're not with Kaiser Permanente, you're making an enormous mistake. It's the greatest health care organization in the world."