



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Musician Finds Rhythm with a Healthy Heartbeat

PENSACOLA, FLA. (Feb. 1, 2024) –Stephanie Leigh Hall knows about keeping the rhythm and the beat. She is a well-known musician around Northwest Florida, and she was the very first heart surgery patient at the new Baptist Hospital campus.

Stephanie became concerned about her health after becoming winded, especially when carrying her guitar equipment to shows. The issue persisted for two years, with people saying the symptoms were typical for someone of her age and weight.

Stephanie felt at her core her experience was not normal, and she sought out a new primary care provider and found [Kendall Henry, PA-C](#). “She listened to me,” Stephanie said. “After seeing my family history, she sent me in for a lung scan.”

The lung scan revealed that Stephanie had an ascending aortic aneurysm. This is when the top part of the aorta, the main artery that pumps blood to the rest of the body, is enlarged. This makes the aorta more likely to rupture or tear.

Stephanie was referred to [Russell S. Ronson, M.D., FACS, FACC](#), a cardiothoracic surgeon at [Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute](#). Dr. Ronson listened to Stephanie’s concerns and scheduled surgery for an ascending aortic replacement within two weeks. The surgery consisted of removing the top portion of the aorta and replacing it with a synthetic, tube-shaped graft.

“At Baptist, we have a phenomenal heart program,” Dr. Ronson said. “I tell patients that there is no need to travel outside of Pensacola for heart surgery. We’re able to offer the highest level of care right here at Baptist.”

“Everyone, from the nurses to the cleaning staff, was compassionate and empathetic,” Stephanie said. “My nurse, Michael, explained what was happening every step of the way.”

With surgery behind her, Stephanie continues her recovery with [Baptist’s Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation](#) program. As her health improves, she has resumed her passion for performing and playing in front of audiences.

Stephanie’s example of listening to her instincts to pursue a provider who would take her symptoms seriously is a reminder of the importance of advocating for one’s own health.

For more information about primary care or heart and vascular services at Baptist, visit ebaptisthealthcare.org.

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For more information about this press release or to schedule an interview, send an email to BHCMediaRelations@bhcpns.org or call 850.791.5254.

About Baptist Health Care

Baptist Health Care is a not-for-profit health care organization based in Northwest Florida that is committed to helping people throughout life's journey. Baptist continuously strives to be a national leader in quality and service. Baptist Health Care includes three hospitals, four medical parks, Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine and a large network of primary care and specialty physicians. Baptist Health Care is one of the largest non-governmental employers in Northwest Florida.

- Baptist Health Care • Baptist Hospital • Gulf Breeze Hospital • Jay Hospital*
- Baptist Medical Parks Airport, Nine Mile, Navarre and Pace • Andrews Institute • Baptist Medical Group*
- Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute • Baptist Health Care Foundation*