



Max Lim Jun Wei

(29 Sep 1995 – 18 Sep 2016)

Sunday 18th September 2016
changed our family forever.

Our son Max who was 11 days short of his 21st birthday, collapsed during his usual soccer game (his most passionate sport among the many that he participated). Two of his team mates performed CPR while waiting for the ambulance. The hospital's Emergency team and the ambulance paramedics did all they could to revive his heart, but sadly it was not meant to be.

After 4 months, we received an official letter from the Coroner's office indicating Max's final cause of death, Acute Myocarditis.

We wish to share our story and hope to highlight more on myocarditis. To all the grieving parents, siblings and love ones that are in similar situations, we hope our story can give each other strength to face each new day.

From my own research as a commoner, myocarditis is the inflammation and damage of the heart muscle. Many causes contribute to myocarditis and it's difficult to diagnose this condition. As we all know, the heart's function is to pump blood. Hence when the heart is enlarging, the pumping function is compromised. Some common symptoms are breathlessness, feeling unwell or easily tired. In certain cases, the heart may stop, commonly known as a heart attack or cardiac arrest, resulting in death. The frightening part is that the heart may stop even when the person is not doing any strenuous exercise.

As long as you are down with any flu-like symptoms, please refrain from any physical activity. Getting to a Heart Specialist will enhance the chances of survival. Many young and fit people who die from a sudden heart seizure are usually diagnosed with myocarditis.

We met the pathologist who did the post mortem on Max. He confirmed that his heart was enlarged. It was due to viral infections but they just could not pin point the type of virus.

Max had no history of any heart conditions or illness except for childhood asthma. He went through a thorough medical check before enlisting for National Service (NS) in May 2014. In our country, every male citizen who turns 18 must serve NS, usually for about 2

years. If they are medically fit, they will be classified as combat status and the physical training can be very demanding.

2 weeks before his death, he consulted the University's doctor for some diarrhoea medication and some cream for his sprained ankle. There were no other symptoms at all. We had a seafood dinner together on that Friday night. The next day he spent time with his girlfriend and another group of friends at night. Sunday morning, we had breakfast together and that was the last time we saw him alive. He seemed fine and displayed no symptoms of tiredness or whatsoever.

We received the phone call at around noon with regards to his collapsing and immediately rushed down to the hospital but never got the chance to say goodbye to our Max. No amount of words can describe this pain, emptiness and sadness. It's just not natural, as his parents, we should be the ones going before him and not the other way.

Many questions will surface from time to time but unfortunately there are no answers at all. Dealing with the guilt and regrets are the real emotions that affect us most. The days have become much more difficult to handle; time seems to pass rather slowly and the heart and mind becomes very heavy.

However, we take comfort and strength in knowing that Max strived very hard to achieve his fullest potential. He received the Star award (NS) for January 2016 plus an outstanding conduct testimonial from his Commanding Officer for his NS time spent at the Military Medicine Institute.

Max was well liked by his superiors and his NS colleagues. His commanding officer considered him an asset to any organisation. Max wanted very much to enter a University, hence he worked hard during his Junior College days and was very happy to get a place with the Singapore Management University, School of Economics. Upon finishing his NS in early March 2016, Max worked 4 different jobs prior to entering the university in August 2016. He wanted to make his own money to pay for his university fees.

Max touched many of his friends warmly and sincerely. Over time we got to know from his wide circle of friends on how he conducted himself and many remembered his infectious smile and willingness to help.

I still feel thankful that I have my wife and daughter to love and care for. I will do my best to fulfil my duties and responsibilities towards my family. I feel Max inside us all the time, I feel him urging me on for the family.

Max Lim, we love you always and you will remain forever young and forever 21 to us.

With Love Always,
Lionel (Father), Sara (Mother) & Isabel (Sister)

*Always remembered
and deeply loved*



