

## Share your story



### Ellen Coker, Bury

Ellen was diagnosed with high cholesterol at the age of 15, when she found a lump on her knuckle. It was removed and analysed and found to be a tendon Xanthomata. At this stage, through genetic testing and family history testing, she was diagnosed with the extremely rare Homozygous Familial Hypercholesterolaemia, which affects only 1 in a million people.

*“I was placed on medication at this stage and monitored. Unfortunately despite this, at the age of 18, I started to suffer chest pains which went on for a few years. At the age of 21 I was eventually diagnosed as suffering from Angina Pectoris, causing myocardial ischaemia. I had to undergo a triple coronary artery bypass graft - CABG - at the incredibly young age of just 21. At this stage I was three years into my degree, studying to be a vet at Bristol Vet School. I recovered well and thankfully was allowed back into university and went on to finish my degree.”*

Since her operation Ellen has been undergoing DALI apheresis, a procedure similar to dialysis, twice a month, and taking ongoing statin and Ezetomibe amongst other medications.

Despite this treatment obviously impacting upon her life, Ellen is doing her best to lead a normal and full life.

Ellen became aware of HEART UK after receiving red laces in her London Marathon pack back in 2011, and has since joined our community as an Ambassador.

*“I am extremely committed to raising awareness of the problem of cholesterol, especially that it can be inherited. People are amazed that I suffer with the problem as I’m young, fit, slim and am outwardly healthy 32 year old woman.”*

Ellen is campaigning to get a DALI treatment centre established in Manchester, as currently she must travel the 70 miles on her own funding to receive her treatment.

Aphaeresis is a life-saving treatment and currently there are no functional centres in the North West. HEART UK are committed to campaigning for more treatment centres across the country. Learn more about our campaigns [here](#)

Ellen is committed to raising funds for HEART UK and will be participating in the Great North Swim on June 23 2012, with all money going to HEART UK.

If you would like to take part in a sporting challenge for HEART UK, please visit the Get Involved section of the website. We'd love to have you on the team!

If you feel you could make a difference as a HEART UK Ambassador, or would like to find an Ambassador in your area, please contact Charlie Newton – [cn@heartuk.org.uk](mailto:cn@heartuk.org.uk) or call 01628 777046.