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## Emergency open-heart surgery saves man's life

Bill Wakeham thanks his lucky stars every day that Liverpool Hospital clinicians cared for him when he had multiple heart attacks and went into cardiac arrest earlier this year.

With no prior health issues, the father-of-five said he had turned over a new leaf and made positive choices in his life following his health scare. But the memory of the experience stays with him.

"All of a sudden, I was looking at the light then everything became dark; it was like someone had turned the switch off," Mr Wakeham said.

Mr Wakeham's quick-thinking brother took him to Liverpool Hospital as soon as his symptoms presented.

The Canley Vale man had chest pain and it wouldn't go away. He began sweating and couldn't sit up in the car while his brother Michael drove him to Liverpool Hospital.

"He saw the signs and knew what was going on. Michael had a heart attack the year before," Mr Wakeham said.

Surgeon Dr Manish Jain performed emergency open-heart surgery which saved Mr Wakeham's life. Dr Jain said he was really happy with his patient's recovery.

"Mr Wakeham's procedure is not very common. Normally you would wait a few days between a balloon pump procedure and open-heart surgery but he was still getting chest pain."

Mr Wakeham, who was home within a week of his surgery, said he was thankful for his quick recovery.

"They told me my heart stopped three times and they were trying their best to bring me back ... and they did."

Mr Wakeham has changed his approach to life, giving up alcohol and cigarettes.

"I'm not eating junk anymore because I'm scared of eating anything with salt or chocolate in it and definitely no fizzy drinks. My surgeon made me promise that I wouldn't drink or smoke.

"This experience has changed who I am."

The busy father, whose eldest child is 19 and his youngest is five, said all his family were checking in on him daily following the scare.

"My five-year-old will ring me, worried, asking me when I'm coming home. This has brought us so close together as a family."