

2026 1-3 Medical suggestion

A blessed and joyful New Year to you!

It has been on my mind to send a general note as a doctor to you.

Keeping up with changes in general surgery over the years has been a challenge, so it is not surprising that I have not always been aware of changes in other specialties. Descriptions have been narrowed based on new information, new tests are available, and there have been many new treatments that were just starting to be offered 45 years ago that are now routine.

Several months ago my medical provider suggested a Calcium Cardiac CT scan to give a general view of my heart arteries. This was “when you have an extra \$100” since the patient pays for this test, and I put it on my to-do list. I was not on any prescription medications, my blood pressure was low-normal, and a couple of lab tests were improving.

This past summer I saw an article by someone who had a serious heart attack, and then had the above-mentioned test. Her scan after the attack showed a 90% block and she had two stents put in. What prompted this note was a woman my age in my home church who had a massive heart attack this fall with stents soon after, a supporting pastor who had open-heart bypass surgery in December, and a friend my age who had four-artery bypass surgery recently.

I had the scan a few weeks after my accident in September, thinking it was probably time since God had spared my life. Three of the four arteries were in great condition; the fourth one, the main artery for the left heart, showed moderate narrowing. My birthday gift was a medication to stabilize that area. We would have not known about this without the scan.

I am suggesting that anyone over 65 should consider asking their healthcare provider about this test, particularly if there are symptoms of heart problems, a family history of heart disease, or risk factors to consider. More knowledge could result in better care of the body God has given to each of us.

May God give you a productive and healthy 2026.

Dr. Anne