



# David Schaeffer

Yeo & Yeo Goes *Red*

## DAVID SCHAEFFER

Managing Principal  
Yeo & Yeo Board of Directors

## Contact Me

davsch@yeoandyeo.com  
989.793.9830

Connect with me on  
**LinkedIn**



## Meet Dave

My wife, Kristine, and I have been married for thirty years. We have four grown boys, a wonderful daughter-in-law and welcomed our first grandson, Benjamin, this year. I tend to think of myself as a pretty active man. I work between forty and sixty hours per week, attend many community functions and enjoy all the time I can with my wife, family and friends.

Despite my generally healthy lifestyle, I came to a turning point in my life. On August 6, 2013, I went for a jog. I enjoy running and this was not unlike any other day until I felt a sharp pain in my back. Dr. Dan Kehres, Chiropractor, offered to see me after business hours to try to relieve my pain. Shortly after I arrived at his office, I began experiencing great pain and collapsed. I later learned that Dr. Kehres performed CPR on me until an ambulance was able to transport me to the hospital.

It was a couple of days before I learned the pain came from a 100-percent blockage of my left descending artery, the main source of blood flow to the heart. It's a condition called the widow maker because of its low survival rate. It is an absolute miracle that I'm alive and healthy today! I hope that by sharing my story I can prevent another person from putting their loved ones through what my heart attack put my family through.

## Dave, what do you do to be heart-healthy?

Many will agree – it can be extremely difficult to be heart healthy. From what I've learned the hard way, the keys to a healthy heart are good eating habits, regular exercise and limited stress. Genetics also play a role, but we can't change that. Let's look at the other three that may have played a factor in my heart attack.



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**Good Eating Habits.** I have to admit – I love food – all kinds of it. I like salads and burgers, hummus and potato chips, fruit and cookies, vegetables and candy. It’s all good. My problem, I lack discipline. In most areas of my life I am in charge, driven and disciplined. With food, no way. It is definitely my biggest character flaw.

Lunch out at restaurants four to five days per week, evening engagements at community functions, and of course snacks and candy available 24/7 in every corner of our office. For a lover of food, it’s nearly impossible to do it right. I am much better than I used to be – I eat many more salads now.

**Regular exercise.** I’ll admit, the general day-to-day grind makes this one difficult. Work, community functions, quality time with my wife and kids, rest ... and oh yeah, exercise regularly. We all have plenty of reasons why it can’t be done. Good reasons. Actually, I do much better in this regard than I do with food. I’ve always been pretty active. Aging really stinks though. Not too long ago I would play basketball and racquetball, run several miles, and do whatever other extreme things I could find. Now, my body has told me that I can’t do that stuff anymore. I’m struggling to find meaningful and effective exercise that doesn’t put me to sleep.

I walk on a treadmill or through parks, run occasionally if it’s on a soft surface, lift a few weights, and try Pilates from time to time. It isn’t the best, but we all have to learn to adapt. At least my knees and ankles still allow golf and softball!

**Limit Stress.** Long hours, deadlines, goals, and accountability ... not really stress reducers. I am learning to combat stress. I delegate when possible, don’t sweat the small stuff, take plenty of time off to relax and enjoy life, and spend time in prayer. Also, I have the most supportive wife on the planet who makes every effort to assure that our home is a safe haven – a comfortable and relaxing place to come home to and leave day-to-day stressors behind.

### What is your motivation?

I never again want to put my wife through what she went through in 2013 as a result of my heart attack – or worse. Plus, I have gobs more energy when I’m working out and eating healthy, and my aging bones don’t creak as much when they’re carrying a little less bulk. We have a lot of travel plans for retirement when that time comes. We want to be able to enjoy them without restrictions.

### How does Yeo & Yeo support your healthy habits?

Yeo & Yeo does a great job of supporting healthy lifestyles. We have monthly, themed Fitbit challenges, flexible work arrangements, banking of overtime, many fun office activities, sponsoring of employee sports teams, weight loss challenges, access to Blue Cross Blue Shield’s Wellness programs ... the list goes on and on. Clearly, if I’m not healthy, it’s my own fault. And just in case, defibrillators will soon be located in each office!



David Schaeffer with  
Dr. Kehres of Kehres Health  
& Chiropractic in Saginaw,  
Michigan.