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NAME: Ashifa
AGE: 52

REASON TO CONTACTING BEST DOCTORS

To confirm cancer diagnosis and treatment options

BEST DOCTORS EXPERT SPECIALTY:
Medical Oncology and Hematology

“ Best Doctors was incredible — they were very supportive, responsive and timely. Throughout the process, they would give us amazing updates.”

BEST DOCTORS FOUND THE RIGHT DIAGNOSIS FOR ASHIFA, SAVING HER FROM THE WRONG AGGRESSIVE TREATMENT.

Ashifa developed a small lump on her neck and was referred to a specialist for a biopsy. The results came back negative, but her general practitioner still recommended she get the lump removed as its structure was changing and her voice was being affected.

Ashifa's operation was successful but 10 days later, she received a call from her surgeon who informed her that the preliminary pathology results revealed she had an aggressive case of metastatic squamous head and neck cancer. Her team of doctors was unable to determine the source of the cancer and naturally, Ashifa and her family were very concerned.

Although she lacked a real understanding about vital aspects of her diagnosis and the source of her cancer, Ashifa's local oncology team recommended she begin a very aggressive treatment plan that called for 30 rounds of chemotherapy and concurrent radiation. Not only was she feeling lost, Ashifa was also very confused by her lack of common symptoms, such as fatigue and pain.

“It made no sense to me, but they said in 25% of cases, they can't find the source of the cancer and they have to go in and zap everything,” Ashifa explained. Unsettled, she underwent additional testing including a PET scan and an MRI. She also had a tonsillectomy, because the type of cancer she was diagnosed with has a tendency to hide in the tonsils, which must be removed in order to be biopsied. Ashifa described this procedure as the worst pain she has ever experienced.

Frustration set in and she decided to contact Best Doctors, to which she had access via her insurance policy. Both Ashifa and her husband were in touch with the Best Doctors team a few times every week from that point on. Their ultimate goal was to obtain clarity about her diagnosis and treatment options from a world renowned Best Doctors expert.

“At this point I had two surgeries and a total of 16 biopsies were done and they still couldn't find the source of the cancer,” Ashifa said. Best Doctors began examining her medical case but Ashifa grew even more anxious when her local doctors decided to stick with the original treatment plan and scheduled Ashifa for her first round of chemo.

Luckily, Best Doctors had Ashifa's biopsy samples retested by an independent pathologist and determined that Ashifa had an autoimmune related condition, not squamous cell carcinoma. A clean biopsy sample was then taken and sent to Best Doctors specialists for further testing. At this point, Best Doctors' medical director had become involved in Ashifa's case and also reviewed her biopsy samples.

Days before Ashifa was scheduled to receive her first chemo treatment, she received the life-changing call. Best Doctors' conclusion was definitive: Ashifa did not have cancer and her aggressive treatment plan needed to be cancelled immediately.

“ Best Doctors and my husband saved my life.”

Best Doctors oncology specialists are continuing to work on Ashifa's case in order to determine what caused the lump on her neck. She will be undergoing further tests and everything will be reviewed by both Best Doctors and her local oncology team.

Ashifa truly has no doubts about the immense value of obtaining a second medical opinion and frequently recommends the Best Doctors service to others.

SHE WILL FOREVER CREDIT BEST DOCTORS WITH HELPING SAVE HER LIFE.