

# Group A strep is a form of flesh-eating disease

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what's happening because everything's happening so quick."

Group A strep is a form of bacteria that can cause milder infections like strep throat, but in some cases can advance to a form of flesh-eating disease where amputations are necessary and, in some cases, fatal.

Osadcow's battle with Group A strep started with feverlike aches.

"I broke out in a fever," she said, explaining that she was in pain, and her abdomen was swelling to the point where her stomach looked larger than it was when she was pregnant.

Her midwife noticed that she wasn't able to walk properly, and Osadcow went to the Georgetown hospital.

Doctors did an ultrasound to try to find out what was wrong, at first, it appeared that it may be her appendix. Doctors also did a CT scan.

Osadcow remembers being extraordinarily thirsty, begging staff for water.

"I was completely dry, like Sahara Desert," she said. "I wanted to drink the ocean."

The next morning, doctors informed her that she had a septic infection, from Group A strep, and

she needed a hysterectomy to stop the spread.

"I just started bawling," said Osadcow.

Doctors wanted to treat the infection with antibiotics, but with the aggressive and unpredictable nature of Group A strep, Osadcow says doctors were left with no choice but to act quickly. After a 24-hour treatment of antibiotics, the infection had spread from her uterus to her cervix and Fallopian tubes and she was getting blood clots in her lungs.

"I didn't want to Google anything, I didn't want to know what Group A strep was because I didn't want to know," she said. "You have to be happy and high hopes."

While in isolation at the Georgetown hospital, Osadcow says she shared the room with one other woman who contracted Group B Strep. That woman, Osadcow says, lost her baby as a result of the infection.

"I was crying for her," said Osadcow.

Halton Health says that they have not received any reports of Group B Strep.

"We have had no cases of Group B Strep in infants or children at Georgetown Hospital in the past five months," said Emma Murphy, of Halton Healthcare.

Osadcow says that was

transferred to Brampton for the procedure.

"All the hospitals in Toronto, they basically declined me when they found out it was strep," she said, explaining that doctors gave her a choice of Milton or Oakville. She requested Brampton because her midwife was there.

This was during Christmas. Her husband was at home caring for their two sons while his wife was in the hospital.

"That's just what kept me going, knowing that my kids were at home," she said.

On Christmas Eve, instead of having their traditional Polish dinner with family, the pair shared chocolate milk and cafeteria food from inside Osadcow's hospital room.

"It was the hardest four weeks of my life," said Lukasz Luty, Osadcow's husband. He and the children had to go on antibiotics as a preventive measure and were to stay isolated.

"Thank god we had help from family and friends around us," she said.

Now, as she recovers, Osadcow looks back on the past three months with shock.

"Finally, the last two weeks I'm feeling like myself again," she said. "I can't believe this happened to me."

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