

MY MOTHER'S STORY - PAOLI, INDIANA

I am writing this story in loving memory of my mother. My mother had cellulitis and lymphedema, along with high blood pressure. Since my mother had these conditions she was unable to get health insurance. She was also unable to get medical treatment when she needed to because she could not afford the expenses. My mom found a doctor in Paoli, Indiana at Jubilee Community Health, Inc. Jubilee will only take people who have no health insurance, so that is where my mom got her care.

On Dec 21, 2005 around 2:00 p.m. my mother called me and asked if I could come and take her home because she had an earache. My father called me around 8:30 p.m. and asked if I could come over because Mom was worse. When I got there she was in a lot of pain and running a fever of 104°. Dad and I tried to get her to go to the emergency room, but Mom refused because she had no health insurance to help with the medical bills. Mom told me that she thought it was the cellulitis or the flu. On Dec 22, around 8:30 a.m. my mom called me and asked if I could take her to her doctor in Paoli.

When I got to her house she was in so much pain that she was having trouble talking and breathing. I had to help her to my van with a walker because her legs hurt so badly that she could barely walk. I rushed my mom to her doctor in Paoli. He met us in the parking lot and helped Mom to his office. The doctor told us that Mom's blood pressure was low and she was in severe distress from the pain in her left leg. He sent my mom to the Orange County Hospital's emergency room. He thought that Mom's condition was life threatening.

By the time we got to the E.R, Mom's foot had started to turn black. The E.R. staff hooked Mom up to IVs, started lab work, and sent her to Bloomington Hospital. My husband, father and I followed the ambulance to Bloomington. When we got there Mom's leg was turning black up to her knee. Infection control saw Mom and she spent the night at Bloomington Hospital.

About 9:00 a.m. on December 23, I went to check on Mom and the nurses were doing a heart ultrasound on her. The nurses had Mom hooked up on all kinds of IVs and a pain drip. I was told that all of her organs were shutting down. The doctor then told us that Mom had to go to a hospital in Indianapolis. By now Mom's leg had turned colors up to her thigh and she had large blisters on it. Mom kept telling us how much she hurt and that she loved us very much.

When we arrived at Methodist Hospital her right foot was starting to turn black. She went into surgery about 5:30 p.m. on December 23. She coded in surgery but the surgical team brought her back with CPR. The doctor removed her left leg. She came out of surgery with a fever between 100° - 101°. In the early morning of December 24, Mom's fever went up to 108° within 25 minutes. At this point she was unable to talk to us. About 7:00 a.m. the nurse told us that Mom's blood pressure was dropping. Her fever remained at 108°. At 10:40 a.m. we told the doctor to unhook Mom. She passed away at 11:45 a.m., Christmas Eve morning, 2005.

I wonder a million times over if Mom would have been able to afford to go to the emergency room on December 21 if she would not have passed away. Mom was always afraid of going to the hospital because she did not have insurance. I wish there was some sort of way that people with health problems could get health insurance. My mom might have lived if she had insurance.

I am writing this story in memory of my best friend, my mom. Maybe it will help others in the future get health insurance. Some people cannot afford insurance. No insurance company will sell it to others because they have health problems. There has to be some way for those in need of health insurance to be able to get it.

Donna Clark