

Member story:

Linda



After being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, Linda spent the next 12 years on different medications that were either ineffective or had side effects.

Just before she was about to start a new prescription, Linda learned she had been misdiagnosed and didn't have MS after a Best Doctors expert reviewed her case.

"The Best Doctors report was a confirmation of my gut feeling that I didn't have MS," said Linda.

Her medical journey began when she started experiencing headaches similar to the ones she had prior to the discovery and removal of a brain tumor. Her family doctor sent her for a brain MRI, which was reviewed by her radiologist, who said it looked suspicious. Based on his advice, Linda underwent another MRI three months later, and her radiologist said the results were consistent with a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis. Linda was referred to a neurologist who confirmed her diagnosis following a physical examination.

She was prescribed medication that she took for over a year but said it "did nothing." Another medication caused side effects such as flushing of the face and dizziness, so Linda tried a third drug.

Around this time her neurologist retired and Linda saw a physician assistant (PA) who performed a lumbar puncture,

a diagnostic test for MS that involves analyzing a sample of cerebrospinal fluid.

Although the results of this test made Linda question whether she had MS, the PA insisted the test confirmed her diagnosis. Linda was prescribed a fourth type of medication, which was also ineffective. Just as she was about to start a fifth, a case manager at Blue Cross Blue Shield, Linda's insurer, informed her that she had access to Best Doctors.

Eager for a second opinion, Linda connected with Best Doctors and a neurologist who serves as the director of a multiple sclerosis center in Boston reviewed her case. The Best Doctors expert noted that Linda's imaging was not characteristic of MS, and her symptoms instead were likely a result of spinal stenosis and vascular disease.

Based on the Best Doctors expert's recommendations, Linda underwent additional testing, including another MRI, and the results confirmed that Linda did not have MS. Linda didn't start on the new MS medication, and instead had an injection to ease the pain from the spinal stenosis. She said since stopping all the MS medications, her health has improved.

"I feel much better and I don't feel sick all the time," she said. "Before, the medication was dragging me down and I didn't feel good most of the time. Now that I've stopped I feel much better."

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