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After 24 surgeries, Bangladesh 'tree man' relapses

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"Tree Man" Abul Bajandar, who has been unable to work for years and whose young family lives in the hospital, says he fears he will never be cured

A year ago Abul Bajandar, a Bangladeshi rickshaw-puller dubbed "tree-man" for the bark-like growths that once covered his body, appeared to

have made a full recovery from the rare condition that has afflicted him for a decade.

But twelve months after doctors declared him all but cured following 24 surgeries, Bajandar's hands are once again covered in the growths that characterise his rare condition.

Surgeon Samanta Lal Sen, who last year hailed his cure as a milestone in medical history, now admits Bajandar's case may be more complicated than first thought.

His patient, who has been unable to work for years and whose young family lives in the hospital, says he fears he will never be cured.

"I am scared to have any more surgeries. I don't think my hands and feet will be okay again," the 27-year-old told AFP at the Dhaka hospital where he first came for treatment in January 2016.

Bajandar suffers from epidermodysplasia verruciformis, an extremely rare genetic condition known as "tree-man disease".

Intrigued by his condition, doctors at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital treated him for free, surgically removing more than five kilos (11 pounds) of growths from his hands and feet.

He has been there ever since with his wife and family, who live together in a small room in the hospital.

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