

Bangladesh 'Tree Man' returns to hospital as condition worsens

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A Bangladeshi father dubbed "Tree Man" for the bark-like growths on his body returned to hospital on Sunday after his condition worsened, he told AFP.

Abul Bajandar has had 25 surgeries since 2016 to remove the growths from his hands and feet at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Doctors were on the verge of declaring their [treatment](#) a success before a sudden relapse prompted Bajandar to flee the clinic in May without notifying staff.

But on Sunday he was readmitted to the [hospital](#) after his condition deteriorated, with the growths now covering almost the entirety of his hands and feet, the 28-year-old said.

"I made a mistake by leaving the hospital. I sought alternative treatment but could not find any. I now I understand I should have stayed and continued the treatment here," Bajandar said.

Samanta Lal Sen, a [plastic surgeon](#) at the hospital, said [doctors](#) would resume treatment "very soon", adding the growths had spread to other parts of his body.

"I requested Bajandar to return as soon as possible. Now we have to start from the very beginning. We'll have to conduct more [surgeries](#)," Sen told AFP.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had promised free treatment for Bajandar after his plight captured the sympathies of the country.

He lived in the hospital's expensive private cabin with his wife and daughter for nearly two years during his first round of treatment treatment.

The father of one suffers from epidermodysplasia verruciformis, an extremely rare genetic condition also known as "tree-man syndrome".

Sen said that fewer than half a dozen people worldwide have the disease.

His hospital also treated a young Bangladeshi girl suffering from the condition in 2017.

Doctors declared her surgery a success, but her father later said the growths had returned in even greater numbers, prompting the family to halt treatment and return to their village.

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