

Never Give Up

After seeking tuberculosis treatment for several months and seeing his weight drop to 33kg due to the illness, Mr Tran Thien Khoa was brought to Singapore for treatment and ended up fulfilling a dream: to live life as a normal person again after facing death so many times.



Featuring
Dr Su Jang Wen
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Singapore

Sharing the experience of his recovery, Khoa said that his tuberculosis, an infectious lung infection that is caused by bacteria, was so advanced that most of the doctors he met in Vietnam had little hope for his survival. Yet his will to live managed to win out, for the young man is now able to carry on with his day-to-day life after a month of treatment at Gleneagles Hospital in Singapore.

Born into a family with two sisters in Bien Hoa city in Vietnam, Khoa had a strong will and persevering spirit since his childhood. After his sister moved to the United States with her husband, he lived with his parents while studying in a university in Ho Chi Minh City. Unfortunately, Khoa's life took a turn for the worse when his mother passed away and he soon found himself very ill. The first diagnosis was that he was suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis. Even though the first tuberculosis test came back negative, Khoa continued to suffer from symptoms such as fever and fatigue, which led to him being admitted to hospital on the first day of the Vietnamese New Year.

Despite negative or inconclusive test results, Khoa continued to suffer from symptoms such as fever and breathing difficulties. He began to find himself getting warded regularly, with his health deteriorating.



Mr Tran Thien Khoa

Eventually, Khoa's condition deteriorated to the point where he was coughing blood several times a day and constantly feeling breathless. It was at this point that his family decided to bring him to Singapore for treatment. "Flying via commercial flight



Mr Tran (2nd from right) with Dr Su after a successful surgery.

was too dangerous for his health, so we had medical evacuation," said his sister.

Reaching Gleneagles Hospital at 12 midnight, Khoa was taken to the emergency room where the doctors assessed his situation. By this time, Khoa was considered an acute case, where he had a high risk of dying on the operating table. It was usually a situation where surgery was extremely challenging, but Khoa was in a critical condition and coughing blood non-stop. "We were really confused in this situation, but the doctor and us finally decided to take the risk and have surgery to remove his left lung," said his sister. Even though it took 2 surgeries, the doctors managed to successfully remove his infected lung completely.

On the second week of his recovery, Khoa suddenly felt an acute pain in his abdomen and had difficulty breathing. Scans showed that his liver enzymes had increased and there was a build-up of fluid within his heart walls, and he underwent a third surgery within a week to drain the fluid. Throughout the entire ordeal, his family had feared that the situation was hopeless, but Khoa's will to live never weakened. "Now, the illness is gone and so is the pain. I thank my family and my doctor for not giving up hope on me and standing by me in the face of certain death," he said.

Dr Su Jang Wen, Cardiothoracic Surgeon at Gleneagles Hospital, Singapore:

Tran Thien Khoa is one of the most difficult cases encountered by the team. By the time the doctors saw him, his lung was badly destroyed by tuberculosis and he could not stop coughing up blood. "We explained to his family that due to his

physical weakness, he had a high risk of dying on the operating table if he underwent surgery. However, he was coughing up so much blood at the time that he would almost certainly die without surgery. After much consideration, his family bravely gave us consent to remove his infected left lung," explained Dr Su.

The surgery was very difficult due to the patient's critical condition and low blood pressure as a result of blood loss. Two weeks after the first two surgeries, Khoa suffered from severe abdominal pains and shortness of breath. The ultrasound found an abnormal accumulation of fluid in his heart, and he had to be taken to the operation room for the third time. Thankfully, all three surgeries were successful, and Khoa's condition is now stable, with good lung function. He still has to continue taking anti-infection medicine for a year, but we are confident that he will make a full recovery.

Call us and get a specialist appointment within 24 hours.

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