

Lymphoma: Nurse Practitioner Settles With Patient Over Delay In Diagnosis.

The thirty year-old patient saw a nurse practitioner in her neighborhood health clinic for symptoms of heaviness in her chest and “pins and needles” in her arms, especially when lying in bed.

The nurse practitioner noted that one of the patient’s tonsils was enlarged, but the physical exam was otherwise unremarkable. She obtained an EKG and sent the patient for a chest x-ray, basically to calm her fears. The chest x-ray was read by a radiologist as normal.

The nurse practitioner’s diagnosis was an allergy brought on by a high seasonal pollen count, for which she prescribed an allergy medication.

The patient returned several times over the next few months with the same symptoms. A new chest x-ray revealed the left lung was compressed and a CT showed a large mediastinal mass, which was promptly removed surgically.

The surgery was successful, but the patient still received a \$1,200,000 settlement of her case filed in the Superior Court, Suffolk County, Massachusetts for shortened life expectancy. **Confidential v. Confidential, 2009 WL 3748653 (Sup. Ct. Suffolk Co., Massachusetts, June 1, 2009).**