

## AMITA'S TB STORY: AN UNEXPECTED LESSON

“It started when I was in the second year of my nursing degree. I was an active girl and things were going smooth. Then, during the COVID surge, I started getting a mild fever. As a nursing student, I treated it myself.

### Getting out of hand

Then it started to get out of hand and my friends noticed I was unwell. I went to a doctor and was given antibiotics and fever reducing medication. I was also told to isolate for 14 days due to fear of the pandemic. After this period, I was still unwell and I was hospitalised in May 2020. Lots of tests were carried out and I was given different antibiotics to see which worked, none of them did. Finally, I was taken for a CT scan which showed a small swelling in my intestine which was followed up with an inconclusive biopsy. The doctors were puzzled, and I had yet more rounds of tests in every department, and treatment trials hoping that something would work. I was scared. I began losing hope and was afraid of the results.

“The doctors were puzzled... I began losing hope”

My heart began to race due to inflammation and my fever continued. My lymph nodes and thyroid were also inflamed. A second biopsy finally gave me a diagnosis – multi-drug-resistant TB (MDR-TB).



“As a nursing student, I treated it myself”

It shattered me to the core. My diagnosis was also a shock to my family – particularly as we were already struggling with my grandmother's cancer diagnosis.

I was finally discharged after 108 days of hospital treatment, but this was not the end. I had lost many hours of training and my ongoing illness was tiring and put me at risk in clinical settings. I also needed injectable antibiotics for a further six months.

I took the challenges and sat my exams the same year. This journey had raised the bar for my endurance.

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