Skin Cancer Due to Sun Exposure Fatality File

Mike Boice says a skin lesion showed up on the back of his neck in 2015, and it started to itch and bleed. He had it removed by a dermatologist but tells News 5 it returned twice, and he knew something more was going on inside his body.

Every day, he wakes up knowing there's a good chance it could be his last.

He said, "There are really bad days some days, and there's days I've been angry and mad about it. I'm 64. I have 4 kids. I have 10 grandkids. And I don't want to lose them. I want to see them."

Two years ago, he was told he didn't have much time left.

"When I first met him I didn't think he'd live 6 months. The amount of disease that he had and the debilitated state that he was in, I told him that I thought he had less than 6 months to live," said Dr. Reece Jones, Oncologist at Southern Cancer Center.

Boice says when the basal cell lesion returned on his neck for the third time, he was also having trouble with his left arm and thought it was arthritis. So he had an X-ray, and it showed bone cancer.

One day in 2018, things got really bad. Boice said, "I suddenly couldn't walk. I had no feeling in my legs. I couldn't hold myself. I could move my legs, I could move my toes, but I couldn't hold my weight up."

He tells Cherish Lombard that every scan and test showed basal cell carcinoma.

"What had happened is it had metastasized and turned into a bone cancer. It had gotten into my spine," Boice explained.

Boice was sent to Dr. Jones, who says he's never seen a case quite like this.

“It was obvious that he had a skin cancer that had not been addressed for quite some time. It’s not terribly uncommon for me to see a squamous cell carcinoma patient that has metastatic lung lesions, and I’ll see that a few times a year. This is the first case of metastatic basal cell with the extent of bone lesions that I’ve seen before,” he said.

Dr. Jones tried to treat Boice but says the cancer didn’t respond well. And because of the severity, there’s nothing else that can be done. He says he wishes it had been caught sooner.

“Basal cells obviously are usually caught and cut out and cured with surgery alone,” Dr. Jones told News 5.

Boice now walks with a cane and has to sit frequently because of the pain. He knows his time may be short, so for now, he’s not letting his diagnosis, or anything else, slow him down.

He said, “If you’ve got a mole or a piece of skin or something that doesn’t look right, go have it checked. And then keep making sure the doctor checks it, don’t let him brush it off that it’s just this or that because it could turn into something more.”