



Peace of Mind for Complex Conditions

When Kenneth was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of bile duct cancer, his wife, Linda, set up a virtual second opinion with The Clinic by Cleveland Clinic to reassure the couple that they were on the right path for care.

The ability to connect with a physician who has experience with this rare form of cancer gave us the peace of mind we desperately needed. Receiving a Virtual Second Opinion has to be the easiest thing we have ever done.

– **Linda**, whose husband, Kenneth, received a Virtual Second Opinion from Cleveland Clinic after being diagnosed with cholangiocarcinoma

The Challenge

In January 2021, Kenneth suddenly became ill with a stomach virus that left him weak and in tremendous pain. When the illness returned in March, his wife, Linda, who works in a radiology practice, became concerned. “My husband had always been extremely healthy,” she says. “I asked his physician for an imaging test that could show us what was happening.”

The test revealed that Kenneth had Stage 4 cholangiocarcinoma, a rare and aggressive form of bile duct cancer. “It was such a shock. We had absolutely no idea this was coming,” Linda says.

Kenneth was referred to a gastrointestinal specialist for care. But while the couple trusted their physician, the nature of Kenneth’s illness made them yearn for input from someone with more experience in treating this rare condition.

One day, Linda was cleaning her home with the TV muted when she happened to look up to see the word cholangiocarcinoma on the screen. It was a story about the Mike Shane, who died of cholangiocarcinoma in 2019, and the [memorial fund](#) established in his honor to fund second opinions for patients with complex conditions.

“I immediately went to the website and found a list of physicians who specialize in this rare cancer, including a physician from Cleveland Clinic—the top choice listed on this site,” Linda says. “It turned out we could receive a second opinion from this physician virtually, right from our home.”



The Solution

Linda reached out to Cleveland Clinic for a Virtual Second Opinion.

“With this type of cancer, sometimes the physicians who are experts in treating it aren’t located in every state. That’s why Virtual Second Opinions are so important,” she says. “When you’re dealing with a rare cancer like cholangiocarcinoma, you want access to physicians who have more experience with this type of cancer than anyone else.”

The process was simple and straightforward. Linda clicked on the link for Virtual Second Opinions by Cleveland Clinic, created an account, and completed Kenneth’s profile. She then chose a convenient appointment time and payment option. Soon after, a nurse contacted Linda to gather more information and discuss next steps.

“Michael Weldon, the nurse, just made it effortless,” Linda says. “We only spoke with him a couple of times, and he took care of everything for us. It was just such a simple, easy process compared to trying to make an appointment with a doctor, where you have to make sure you get all of your records and go in and wait. No, Michael did all of that. It was just an amazing experience.”

Both Kenneth and Linda also found the physician, oncologist Suneel Kamath, MD, to be warm and inviting, which put them at ease. So did the ability to meet with their physician from the comfort of home. “It was so nice to be in a non-hospital environment,” Linda says.

Dr. Kamath conducted a thorough review of Kenneth’s case, from the medical records and imaging scans to the treatment plan prescribed for Kenneth. Ultimately, Dr. Kamath affirmed the treatment plan

Run, don’t walk, to get a second opinion from Cleveland Clinic. It is just so simple and invaluable in getting the peace of mind you need.

– Linda

that Kenneth’s physician had prescribed while also suggesting a couple of additional treatment options for Kenneth’s physician to consider.

“It gave me great reassurance that we’re doing everything we can for this type of cancer,” Linda says.

Why a Virtual Second Opinion by Cleveland Clinic Made the Difference

“Especially when you’re dealing with a severe illness, you need another doctor to confirm that the treatment journey you’re on is the right one. In my almost 30 years of working in healthcare, our Virtual Second Opinion from the Cleveland Clinic has to be the easiest thing we have ever done. The level of experience that our nurse and physician possessed exceeded any expectation we might have had, and the visit itself was so rewarding. We were just so pleased to know that we were doing everything we could to treat this disease.

If you’re interested in obtaining a virtual second opinion from experts at Cleveland Clinic, visit [clinic2ndopinion.io](https://www.clevelandclinic.com/virtual-second-opinion).

With The Clinic, patients have virtual access to 3,500 leading Cleveland Clinic specialists with expertise in more than 550 advanced subspecialties—all available through a computer or mobile device. Cases are reviewed by professionals with expertise in a patient’s specific medical condition, leading to less doubt and greater peace of mind when it comes to both treatment plans and patient outcomes. For more information, visit www.theclinic.io.

