

## 'Science of angels': A mother's thankful letter for team who diagnosed rare disease

Video	Audio
<b>ANCHOR LEAD</b>	<p>After a career dedicated to caring for patients with cancer, Nancy Drourr (DROW-er) expected retirement to be the start of a new chapter.</p> <p>But when troubling health issues emerged, she turned to Mayo Clinic, where doctors uncovered a rare and complex disease called sarcoidosis (Sar-COY-doe-sis).</p> <p>Hear how Nancy's search for answers has reinvigorated her pursuit of a lifelong goal.</p> <p>Alex Osiadacz (oh-SIGH-duss) has her story.</p>
Nancy Drourr Patient	"I invested in a very rewarding career taking care of cancer patients. I believed that a big part of my life included service above self."
	<p>After retiring in 2022, Nancy Drourr noticed changes in her health.</p> <p>A lingering rash, fatigue and short-term memory challenges led to years of tests and appointments with physicians near her home in Tampa, Florida.</p> <p>When bloodwork in 2024 suggested Nancy may have a severe kidney condition, she turned to Mayo Clinic.</p>
Fouad Chebib, M.D. Nephrology Mayo Clinic	"When I saw the MRI and the results, there was a concerning finding, which was bone lesions and spleen lesions, and to the radiologist, it was concerning for metastasis or cancer. It could be an infectious process or other autoimmune diseases."
	A biopsy ruled out cancer, but did confirm a diagnosis of sarcoidosis, a disease that affects approximately 200,000 people in the U.S.
Fouad Chebib, M.D. Nephrology Mayo Clinic	"Sarcoidosis is an inflammatory disease in a way that the body is attacking the organs or the cells. In the case of Nancy, it was quite severe, with multiple organs being involved, from skin to bone to spleen to many other organs."

	While there is no known cure for sarcoidosis, Nancy's care team, including experts in rheumatology, oncology, infectious diseases and other areas, developed a treatment plan to manage her disease.
Nancy Drourr Patient	"It was within my power now to navigate this disease and not give up on the things that brought me such joy."
	<p>Nancy receives weekly treatment and regular follow-ups to measure progress.</p> <p>She's also given more thought to her textile design business.</p> <p>The dream influenced by her grandmother decades ago was put on hold to focus on her health.</p> <p>Nancy's journey also inspired her to write a letter to her care team titled "The Science of Angels," in which she shares her gratitude for the diagnosis and treatment options.</p>
Nancy Drourr Patient	"I will forever remember how deeply the science of angels impacted my life and those of my loving sons. Thank you for instilling hope and a medical path forward in the treatment of my rare and complex disease. With a grateful heart, Nancy Drourr."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Alex Osiadacz.