

Hemostat Lodged In Woman Unknowingly For 25-plus year

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A Lyerly woman had surgery for a caesarian section for her three children 35, 38 and 46 years ago. During one of those operations someone left a six-inch long stainless steel hemostat in her which was removed in December. She relates her ordeal and subsequent recovery as "a miracle." Hixie Brewer, a retired schoolteacher, didn't know that the foreign object was left inside her until about 10 years ago. As the years went by the object began slowly moving and finally encased itself inside her colon. "We didn't know anything about this until 10 years ago," Mrs. Brewer said. "I had a kidney infection and they wanted to see why. So, the lab people at Harbin Clinic through Dr. James Crane's office is how we found the object was there in the first place." "We don't know if the hemostat was left in there when Jack was born, Rebecca was born or when Kathy was born. Mrs. Brewer had three caesarian sections when their three children were born. "I asked someone 10 years ago would it have been left in there from the last one (Jack) and they said you couldn't tell because the way babies are, the hemostat could have been down in the cavity under your baby and they would not see it," she said. "So it has been there at least 35 years," Mrs. Brewer said. She said the family saw the x-ray and it looked like it was just under the skin. Mrs. Brewer said that when Dr. Crane saw the hemostat on the x-ray, he called Thomas back and it scared him to death. "Then Dr. Crane said he wanted the surgeons to see it. Dr. Harbin was with someone so he went into Dr. Clarence McKemie's office and they called Dr. Harbin."

The doctors told her that it may be embedded with gristle now and it might cause more problems to take it out than to leave it, she explained. "We just left it," Mrs. Brewer said. "Last July Mrs. Brewer began having problems that at the time she didn't know related to the hemostat. "I was sick and I went to the emergency room and they said I had acute diverticulitis," Mrs. Brewer said. "They gave me medicine for it and I got better but it didn't stop the nagging hurting." She said people that had been diagnosed with acute diverticulitis told her that she would never get over it and that was what was causing her nagging pain. In September she went back to see Dr. Brown. The doctor sent her to get a cat scan and it showed up on the cat scan and then they decided they wanted a colonoscopy. "After the colonoscopy, the doctor told Thomas it wasn't diverticulitis because there were no polyps and they didn't find anything wrong," she added. "But the hemostat was going to have to come out." She explained that after Dr. McKemie saw the colon test and said the hemostat had penetrated inside the colon and was encased there. "That was what had caused the trouble back in July when I thought I had something else," she said. "Something happened between July 1998 and July 2008 for it to be able to move into the colon," her daughter added. "It was moving up toward her heart," Mrs. Thomas said. "It moved just a little bit at a time and sealed itself and was completely encased in the colon," Mrs. Brewer explained. Your body is miraculous and I believe it was God's hand that allowed the years without causing health problems. It was moving so slow that because your body is a miraculous thing it seals around the foreign body so there wouldn't be any infection. They had to remove eight inches of her colon and restructured her colon. **THANK PEOPLE** "We want to thank all the nurses and the doctors and especially North Georgia Home Health because they came every day and have been super," Mr. Brewer said. "Dr. McKemie was great and Floyd Hospital was great." "Dr. McKemie was wonderful," Mrs. Thomas echoed. Mrs. Brewer said she can look back now over the years and see that she had pains that probably were associated with the hemostat in her body. "If we had known they were there we might could have related to it," Mrs. Brewer said. "We were setting out plants one time after one of her caesarians and she told me that something "was sticking her," her husband Thomas said. "I told her that they must have sewed her up wrong." The couple said that some people ask them if they were going to sue over the incident. "We wouldn't sue over this, we wouldn't even think about it," Mr. Brewer said. "A lot of people would but God is too great to let me live through all this for me to think about getting revenge from somebody," Mrs. Brewer added. The operation to remove the hemostat was in December. "She struggled for six months as far as eating, changing her diet and doing everything trying to relieve herself of that pain and it happened to be the hemostat," her daughter Rebecca said. "It is amazing that God took care of her for at least 35 years with a foreign object in her," Mrs. Thomas said. "There are so many things that could have gone wrong but there were so many things that went right." Mrs. Thomas said that her mother getting sick in July was because of the movement of the hemostat. "She is almost back to 100 percent," her daughter said with a smile. Mrs. Brewer has never flown so that would have been why going through a security machine would never have been set off or even at the courthouse. She said that she really couldn't tell that there was something in her abdomen during those years. "We are hoping that the minor medical issues she has faced in the past will change," Mrs. Thomas said. "She may be able to come off some of her medicine because some of her problems may have been caused by the hemostat." "We are just thankful that we had a miracle," Mrs. Brewer said. "I told a Home Health nurse that I had asked for a miracle and she said that I could claim it."