

Tumor Causes Young Woman To Stop Needing Sleep

Sydney Lupkin

Cristina Speirs, 22, was a self-proclaimed "health freak" during her senior year of college, which is all the more reason she would have never guessed that her body would [betray](#) [1]her the way it did.

She exercised six times a week, taught hot yoga classes and drank a lot of water throughout the day to stay hydrated. So, when she stopped feeling tired and started getting up more frequently in the middle of the night to go to the bathroom, she didn't think anything of it.

"I had a lot of energy," Speirs said. "I wasn't sleeping. ... I was always on the go. I was never tired."

She would eventually learn that she had a tumor the size of an orange on her adrenal gland, and that it was making the hormones that kept her up at night.

Doctors first noticed a problem at Speirs' annual checkup in the fall of 2012 when they found that her potassium levels were low, but her blood pressure was "through the roof."

But they had no idea what was causing the strange symptoms.

"That really freaked me out because them not knowing what's wrong with me -- they're doctors, you know?" Speirs said.

A cardiologist quickly determined there was nothing wrong with her heart, but Speirs' mother suggested a renal sonogram to check her kidneys.

Speirs noticed that the sonogram technician spent a long time lingering over her kidneys and looked confused. Alarmed, Speirs asked what was wrong. The technician told Speirs she needed an MRI right away because she suspected Speirs had one large combined kidney instead of two normal-sized kidneys.

"She said, 'You don't feel anything?'" Speirs said. "I was like, 'No. I feel fine.'"

The MRI would reveal that Speirs had normal kidneys. It was a 10-centimeter tumor that the technician was seeing.

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