

Freehold resident Matt Schiappa was just 43 years old when he was diagnosed with skin cancer. He is healthy and happy today, grateful for the care he received at Jersey Shore.



In the Right Place at the Right Time

Jersey Shore University Medical Center *Matt Schiappa dodged a potentially deadly cancer, thanks to the sharp eyes of his physician.*

ATTORNEY MATTHEW SCHIAPPA OF FREEHOLD WASN'T THRILLED WHEN another motorist rear-ended him on his way to a deposition in February 2013. Little did the 43-year-old know the crash — and a nudge from a perceptive physician — would end up saving his life.

Following the accident, Matt was troubled by pain in his head and shoulder. His employer referred him to **Timothy Rider, M.D.**, of Jersey Shore University Medical Center, for a worker's compensation exam.

A Timely Discovery

During his visit, Dr. Rider noticed a suspicious-looking mole on Matt's back. He urged Matt to see a dermatologist as soon as possible.

Matt was skeptical at first.

"I told him that I'd had the mole for at least 11 years, because when I first met my wife in 2002, she remarked on it," he says.

Dr. Rider repeated his advice and offered to write a referral letter. Matt said he already had a dermatologist and said he'd make an appointment soon.

On his way out, Dr. Rider handed Matt an X-ray prescription. When Matt reached for it, Dr. Rider didn't let go. "He leaned in, looked me in the eye and said, 'You're going to the dermatologist, right?'" Matt recalls.

The gesture got Matt's attention. He made an appointment that afternoon.

A Tragedy Avoided

Just days later, Matt was diagnosed with invasive malignant melanoma, a dangerous, fast-growing form of skin cancer. He was referred to surgical oncologist **James Goydos, M.D.**, at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey. As the state's only system partner of Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, our patients receive the very latest treatments and protocols only available at NCI-designated cancer centers.

Fortunately the cancer hadn't spread. However, Dr. Goydos explained that Matt's melanoma likely would have grown deep enough to metastasize within 12 to 18 months.

Matt had surgery to remove the melanoma in April 2013. The procedure was successful, and Matt has been healthy for more than a year. He visits his dermatologist every three months for a checkup and has body scans four times a year to check for dangerous lesions.

Matt recently sent Dr. Rider a photo of him and his family on vacation in the Bahamas. "Should the day ever come when you feel down or low, perhaps you can look at the picture and remember with pride that you saved a man's life and kept his family together," he wrote.

Dr. Rider is appreciative, but insists he didn't go above and beyond. "Matt did the most important thing by getting himself checked out," he says.



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