# Mother recounts nightmare ordeal as son suffers emergency care failures in Turkey



A family's dream holiday in Turkey turned into a nightmare when five-year-old Layton Bainbridge required emergency medical attention after experiencing severe stomach pain. Kay Bainbridge, a mother of three from Rainham, Kent, found herself navigating an alarming and distressing situation when the hotel's doctor refused to provide help without upfront payment.

Initially visiting a local doctor, Kay was shocked to be asked for a deposit of over £1,000 before any examination could take place. Faced with little choice and her son in agony, she handed over her remaining cash, which had been intended for the last days of their holiday. The pressure increased as clinic staff became aggressive when she indicated she could not pay further fees. Such experiences shine a light on the wider issues surrounding healthcare for tourists in Turkey, where the UK government's advice emphasises the necessity of comprehensive travel insurance, warning that European Health Insurance Cards are not valid in the country and highlighting the risks of medical tourism.

After being transferred to Baskent University Hospital in Alanya, Kay's distress only deepened. She described the facility as 'rundown' and experienced a lack of professionalism from medical staff, compounded by an alarming language barrier. "All this was going on like no one spoke English. I didn’t have a clue what was happening," she said. The reality of emergency services in Turkey has been scrutinised, especially following reports of substandard care and issues faced by both local and foreign patients.

The terrifying nature of Layton's experience became even more pronounced as the medical staff seemingly neglected proper care. Kay recounted a particularly harrowing moment when the paramedics fell asleep during transit to the hospital, leaving her to monitor her son's condition alone. Upon arrival, she was immediately overwhelmed by panic, unsure of what procedures would be performed and fearing for her son's wellbeing. She later described the anaesthesia administration as alarming, with Layton pleading with the staff to stop while they restrained him to insert a cannula, an incident that has left lasting scars on both mother and son.

Further adding to her distress, Kay was stripped of their passports upon admission to the hospital, only to find herself later embroiled in a frantic search for them after the hospital claimed they had been lost. Kay's ordeal raises serious questions about patient care dynamics in Turkey, particularly in private hospitals, where the lure of cost-effective healthcare is often tempered by concerns over quality. The prevalence of reports regarding improper medical practices, such as the treatment and care afforded to tourists, has prompted broader discussions about the need for governmental oversight in medical tourism.

After paying £1,270 for emergency medical services, Kay faced yet another challenge when Layton's condition necessitated a longer stay than anticipated, with her insurance company refusing to cover additional accommodation costs. The family found themselves sleeping in the airport awaiting an early return flight to the UK after Kay courageously decided against leaving Layton unattended in the hospital.

The lasting psychological trauma from this harrowing experience has deeply affected Layton, compounding the stress with his clear aversion to returning to Turkey. "My poor child had to spend eight hours on the cold floor in a Turkish airport because we had nowhere else to go," his mother recounted, illustrating the dire circumstances they endured.

Back in the UK, Kay intends to have her son thoroughly examined, particularly concerning worries raised over the details in layton’s medical documentation, which suggested irregularities in his treatment. The mention of his appendix – which had never been removed – has led to her fears about the possibility of inappropriate practices occurring while in Turkish care.

This incident echoes broader concerns, such as the alarming reports following the mysterious deaths of UK nationals visiting Turkey for medical procedures. In the case of Beth Martin, a mother who tragically passed away after an initial hospital visit, subsequent autopsy findings revealed unsettling discrepancies regarding her health and treatment during her stay. These events underscore the vital necessity of appropriate oversight and effective patient safety practices within Turkey’s healthcare system, particularly as it caters to the burgeoning medical tourism sector.

As families like Kay's navigate these treacherous waters, the imperative for informed travel choices cannot be overstated, emphasising the need for vigilance and thorough preparatory measures before embarking on health-related travel abroad.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759717/They-treated-like-animals-Mother-dream-holiday-Turkey-destroyed-son-rushed-mortuary-esque-hospital-excruciating-stomach-pain-reveals-worst-things-emergency-care-abroad.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/turkey/health)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759717/They-treated-like-animals-Mother-dream-holiday-Turkey-destroyed-son-rushed-mortuary-esque-hospital-excruciating-stomach-pain-reveals-worst-things-emergency-care-abroad.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.euronews.com/travel/2022/12/22/turkey-travel-warning-issued-by-uk-government-following-22-medical-tourism-deaths)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759717/They-treated-like-animals-Mother-dream-holiday-Turkey-destroyed-son-rushed-mortuary-esque-hospital-excruciating-stomach-pain-reveals-worst-things-emergency-care-abroad.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://expatturkiye.com/emergency-medical-services-in-turkey-what-to-do/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759717/They-treated-like-animals-Mother-dream-holiday-Turkey-destroyed-son-rushed-mortuary-esque-hospital-excruciating-stomach-pain-reveals-worst-things-emergency-care-abroad.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.emro.who.int/emhj-volume-29-2023/volume-29-issue-3/patient-safety-culture-and-attitudes-among-emergency-care-unit-nurses-in-tuerkiye.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759717/They-treated-like-animals-Mother-dream-holiday-Turkey-destroyed-son-rushed-mortuary-esque-hospital-excruciating-stomach-pain-reveals-worst-things-emergency-care-abroad.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[7]](https://www.hmpgloballearningnetwork.com/site/emsworld/original-contribution/ems-around-world-violence-inflation-threaten-turkish-emergency)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759717/They-treated-like-animals-Mother-dream-holiday-Turkey-destroyed-son-rushed-mortuary-esque-hospital-excruciating-stomach-pain-reveals-worst-things-emergency-care-abroad.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.euronews.com/travel/2022/12/22/turkey-travel-warning-issued-by-uk-government-following-22-medical-tourism-deaths)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759717/They-treated-like-animals-Mother-dream-holiday-Turkey-destroyed-son-rushed-mortuary-esque-hospital-excruciating-stomach-pain-reveals-worst-things-emergency-care-abroad.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://theworld.org/stories/2016/07/30/turkeys-emergency-room-doctors-are-tired-getting-beaten)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759717/They-treated-like-animals-Mother-dream-holiday-Turkey-destroyed-son-rushed-mortuary-esque-hospital-excruciating-stomach-pain-reveals-worst-things-emergency-care-abroad.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://theworld.org/stories/2016/07/30/turkeys-emergency-room-doctors-are-tired-getting-beaten)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759717/They-treated-like-animals-Mother-dream-holiday-Turkey-destroyed-son-rushed-mortuary-esque-hospital-excruciating-stomach-pain-reveals-worst-things-emergency-care-abroad.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/turkey/health> - The UK government's travel advice for Turkey highlights the importance of ensuring access to necessary healthcare and having appropriate travel insurance. It provides information on emergency medical services, including the 112 emergency number, and advises travellers to check the latest vaccine recommendations and health risks before their trip. The advice also notes that the European Health Insurance Card and Global Health Insurance Card are not valid in Turkey, emphasising the need for comprehensive travel insurance.
3. <https://www.euronews.com/travel/2022/12/22/turkey-travel-warning-issued-by-uk-government-following-22-medical-tourism-deaths> - Euronews reports that the UK government issued a travel warning for Turkey following the deaths of 22 British nationals since January 2019 due to medical tourism. The warning advises tourists to use medical providers approved by Turkey's Ministry of Health, highlighting the risks associated with medical tourism, including complications such as infections and lack of follow-up care when patients return home.
4. <https://expatturkiye.com/emergency-medical-services-in-turkey-what-to-do/> - This guide provides essential information for expatriates in Turkey on navigating the country's emergency medical services. It details the 112 emergency hotline, the role of public and private hospitals, and offers practical tips for handling medical emergencies, such as learning basic Turkish medical terms and identifying the nearest hospital. The guide aims to equip expats with the knowledge to manage health crises effectively.
5. <https://www.emro.who.int/emhj-volume-29-2023/volume-29-issue-3/patient-safety-culture-and-attitudes-among-emergency-care-unit-nurses-in-tuerkiye.html> - A study published in the Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal examines the patient safety culture and attitudes among emergency care unit nurses in Turkey. The research found that a quarter of participants reported errors threatening patient safety, such as medication errors and patient falls. The study highlights the need for improved patient safety practices and training among emergency care nurses in Turkey.
6. <https://theworld.org/stories/2016/07/30/turkeys-emergency-room-doctors-are-tired-getting-beaten> - An article from The World discusses the increasing violence against emergency room doctors in Turkey. It reports that 70% of physicians in Turkey have been targets of physical attacks during their careers, with emergency medicine specialists being particularly vulnerable. The piece explores potential causes, including overcrowded waiting rooms and long wait times, and the impact of such violence on the medical profession.
7. <https://www.hmpgloballearningnetwork.com/site/emsworld/original-contribution/ems-around-world-violence-inflation-threaten-turkish-emergency> - This article from EMS World discusses the challenges facing Turkey's emergency medical services, including violence against healthcare workers and inflation. It highlights the centralised nature of Turkey's EMS, the availability of the 112 emergency hotline, and the investment in healthcare infrastructure. The piece also touches on the impact of violence and economic factors on the quality and accessibility of emergency medical care in Turkey.