

# Doctors treated me like I was a paranoid mum as my girl was dying from meningitis

By Richard Marsden

A BEAUTICIAN whose daughter died from meningitis after a two-hour wait to see a doctor says hospital staff dismissed her as a 'paranoid mother'.

Kirsty Ermenekli, 32, took six-year-old Layla to A&E after she developed a temperature of 105F and sickness, an inquest heard.

The little girl's infection was later found to be 'one of the worst cases of meningitis' Royal Oldham Hospital had ever seen - and triggered sepsis.

But Mrs Ermenekli said no blood test was done on arrival and she felt the doctors 'couldn't be bothered'.

When the youngster was eventually examined by a doctor, he believed a



Devastated: Mother Kirsty Ermenekli

## How to spot the deadly infection

**MENINGITIS** is an infection of the protective membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord, known as the meninges.

It can affect anyone, but is most common in babies and young children.

If not treated quickly, meningitis can cause life-threatening blood poisoning - septicemia - and permanent damage to the brain or nerves.

Early signs are fever, headache, nausea, muscle pain, vomiting and diarrhoea. More specific symptoms are a fever with cold hands and feet, drowsiness, pale, blotchy skin, stiff neck, a dislike of bright lights, and a rash that doesn't fade under pressure.

Claire Donovan, of the charity Meningitis Now, said: 'The most important message is don't wait for the rash, because not everyone gets the rash.'



Tragic: Layla's Temperature was 105F

## Daily Mail END THE SEPSIS SCANDAL

tell-tale rash mark on her hip was a bruise and said she could go home.

After her mother continued to raise concerns, Layla was admitted to a children's ward but her condition deteriorated and she died eight hours after arrival.

At the inquest in Heywood, Greater Manchester, a tearful Mrs Ermenekli said: 'I felt I was being looked at as a paranoid mother and the doctors couldn't be bothered.'

She added: 'All that time in A&E could have made a difference and Layla should have been admitted sooner.'

The inquest heard Layla was a 'thriving child'. Her family said she was quiet and shy but loved to play with her friends, dance and make music videos.

The tragedy occurred in February last year after Layla was taken ill at school.

Mrs Ermenekli, of Failsworth, Manchester, said: 'My mum picked

her up from school. I finished work early and brought her home but her temperature was 40.9C (105.6F). I phoned 111 but felt I was passed from pillar to post.'

Frustrated by the 'lack of urgency', Mrs Ermenekli took Layla to A&E, arriving at 8.30pm. She said: 'It felt like ages before the doctor came.'

'I was quite concerned as I had never had a child with a temperature that high, with it not coming down.'

'At 10.45pm a doctor came and, when he examined her throat, she was sick and continued to be sick. But the doctor told me I could go home with her. It was said she had a viral infection.'

'The nurse came and asked how I felt about her going home but I

said I was not happy and the nurse said she wasn't either. I didn't know anything about this rash or bruising until the junior doctor from paediatrics pointed it out.'

'She was sick and had more marks and was still complaining of head and stomach ache.'

'Staff put a cannula in and she was given antibiotics but then she

## 'They couldn't be bothered'

developed breathing difficulties.' Mrs Ermenekli said her daughter deteriorated to the point staff began resuscitation - but their attempts failed and she died at 4.50am. The devastated mother added: 'I'm aware with sepsis you

have got to act quickly at the early stages. You have to detect it at an early stage because [otherwise] the outcome is Layla.'

The Daily Mail launched its 'End the Sepsis Scandal' campaign in 2016, following the revelation that one-year-old William Mead, from Penryn, Cornwall, died in 2014 because a series of doctors had overlooked telltale signs of the deadly condition.

Yesterday's inquest heard that Layla had one of the 'worst cases of meningitis' doctors at Royal Oldham had seen.

An internal report by Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, which runs the hospital, revealed 'opportunities were missed' to accurately diagnose Layla's condition.

It also said Mrs Ermenekli's con-

cerns were not listened to, and there were two missed opportunities to recognise the rash, the inquest heard.

The report said: 'The doctor who saw the patient initially did not recognise the rash, which was not documented at the time as being of a worrying nature. As a result, the diagnosis of sepsis was missed for three and a half hours.'

The trust said Layla should have been seen by a doctor at 9.05pm instead of 10.45pm.

Expert witness Dr Sandie Bohin, a paediatrician, said there should have been 'very early initial recognition of the signs'.

'There was enough in that very early stage to have triggered positive measures,' she added.

The hearing continues.

# Gin-credible! Message in bottle found after 132 years



Perfect: The 1886 gin bottle and note

THE world's oldest message in a bottle has been found on a beach in Australia - 132 years after it was tossed overboard.

The 19th century gin bottle's message was dated June 12, 1886, and was thrown off the German ship Paula, 590 miles from the West Australia coast.

Written in faint handwriting, the tightly rolled-up note states the coordinates of the vessel and its voyage that had begun in Cardiff before docking at Amsterdam and Makassar, Indonesia.

It eclipses the previous age record for a

## Mail Foreign Service

message in a bottle of 108 years. It was found sticking out from the sand by Tonya Illman, who was walking around dunes on a remote beach north of Wedge Island, near Perth. After first mistaking it for litter, she took it home and baked the letter in the family oven for five minutes - allowing her to carefully unravel and read it.

It is thought the bottle was part of a 69-year experiment to better understand ocean currents to affect more efficient ship-

ping routes. Thousands of bottles were thrown into the sea from German ships from 1864 until 1933.

Mrs Illman said: 'This has been the most remarkable event in my life. To think this bottle has not been touched for nearly 132 years and is in perfect condition, despite the elements, beggars belief. I'm still shaking.'

Researchers believe it was washed up within a year of being jettisoned but was preserved under a layer of damp sand.

They added it was likely unearthed by a storm surge more than a century later.