

FACE THE FUTURE

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A TEENAGE girl's five year battle with growing facial tumours came to an end this week thanks to a Royal London surgeon.

Ian Hutchison successfully reduced 18-year-old Nomatter Taremedzwa Mapungwana's two benign tumours after she was flown over from Zimbabwe for the operation.

Professor Hutchison, who is one of the country's leading facial reconstruction surgeons, was treating the A-level student, known as Tare, at the Royal London in Whitechapel before moving her to St Bartholomew's for the operation on Saturday.

And this week, Tare who had been struggling to breathe and eat because of the tumours on her left upper jaw, known as cemento-ossifying fibroma, is recovering in hospital after the nine-hour surgery.

Professor Hutchison told the Advertiser, Tare had been close to death when she arrived in the East End as she had already lost a lot of blood because of the tumour.



Top facial reconstruction surgeon Ian Hutchison

And he had warned her and her mother Thandiwe that they were taking a massive risk with the operation as it could have led to Tare losing more blood.

The 61-year-old said: "She would have died if I hadn't done the operation.

"If she had bled anymore she would have died but then if she had let the tumour grow anymore she would have died from obstruction to the airway.

"So she had to take the risk."

Professor Hutchison has worked as a consultant for Barts and the London Trust for around 20 years, but insists Tare's operation was "unique".

He added "It was an incredibly arduous operation and it was tricky at points as I had to do it from inside her face. But I did it and I was exhausted at the end of it.

"Tare and her mum are over the moon. Her mum says she has seen a dramatic change in her already.

"But the big change is expected to be seen over the next two weeks."

Professor Hutchison removed 1kg of weight from her face and Tare was sitting up in bed by Tuesday, but her face was still swollen.

The charity Girl Child Network Worldwide which works to protect young girls in Zimbabwe managed to raise £10,000 to fund Tare and her mum's flight to England and the rest of her treatment.

Professor Hutchison performed the operation for free after hearing about Tare through his own charity Saving Faces which is dedicated to reducing of facial injuries and diseases.

