

- From -  
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# My soul's gone

A SOUL singer and former model claims a medical bungle stole her womanhood when she lost a breast after suffering a treatable condition.

Grand Wazoo vocalist Joys Ferris was breastfeeding her first child and developed an inflammation of the breast tissue known as mastitis.

But doctors suspected she had a mystery disease after a blood test showed irregularities and they stopped treating the mastitis with antibiotics.

Mrs Ferris, 33, of McKinnon, was placed in the infectious diseases section of the Royal Melbourne

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Hospital and feared she would die.

"As they were fighting to find out what was wrong, my boob became bigger and bigger and an abscess developed," she said.

"I had a new baby I couldn't hold and my husband at my bedside while I was connected to machines thinking I would die.

"When I was told the boob would have to be removed it didn't hit me because it meant I had another chance to live."

Her breast was removed in January 2007. She was "devastated".

"I felt like half a woman. I am a soul singer and you have to feel like

a woman to sing soul," she said.

Mrs Ferris had reconstructive surgery and took months off her performing career with soul band Grand Wazoo.

"It affected my career, even when I performed all I could feel was the big scar," she said.

Mrs Ferris is suing the Royal Melbourne Hospital for negligence.

Her solicitor, Anne Shortall, of Arnold Thomas and Becker, said: "This has been a devastating result from a very common and treatable condition. It sends a warning to all women who are breastfeeding and to doctors providing treatment for mastitis."



Devastated:  
Soul singer Joys  
Ferris. Picture:  
TONY GOUGH