

'HURT ME SO DEEP': CANCER SURVIVOR SAYS HE WAS ASKED TO HIDE FACE IN SOUTH CAROLINA STORE

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WALTERBORO, S.C. (WCIV) — A Walterboro man is sharing an ugly side of discrimination after an incident at a convenience store on Tuesday.

Kirby Evans, 65, said he stopped for donuts and a drink at the Forks Pit Stop in Walterboro. Shortly after he sat down to eat, he said the manager came up to him.

"Next thing I know, she jerked me into her office," Evans said. "The words that came out of her mouth hurt me so deep," Evans said.

He said the manager told him he was scaring away customers and asked him to cover his face or leave.

"How can a person eat anything with his face covered?" he asked.



Evans is used to people staring at him. Seven years ago, he had surgery to remove basal cell carcinoma, a type of skin cancer, from his face.

His left eye and entire nose was removed, leaving his face disfigured. He said he cannot afford reconstructive surgery and can't wear an eye patch because the skin around it is so sensitive, a patch rubs it raw.

Evans has come to terms with how he looks, but said Tuesday's ordeal was truly humiliating, he left the store crying. His daughter, enraged by the situation, posted about it on social media. It was shared thousands of times.

Not long after, a woman who identified herself as the manager responded to the public post, admitted to it and defended her decision.

"I run a food service business where people dine in," she wrote, adding that she approached Evans about the issue in private, not in front of customers. "I do not see absolutely anything wrong with what I did. He would come in at lunch time and sit at the food booths right at my busy time everyday. I have bills to pay to and I work very hard to please my customers."

Evans said he's sharing his story so she and others can "find it in her heart to treat people with disabilities in a different manner. We don't want to be treated like that. We are human beings," he said.

He said he will never go to the store again and had yet to receive an apology.

Luckily, he does have a place where he feels welcomed and loved, the local Dairy Land.

"When you spend your money at somebody's place of business, you should be welcomed just like this man that owns this place here welcomed me," he said. "I'm welcome. This is my table."

While Evans has every reason to be angry at the world, but said he wakes up every day with gratitude.

The manager of the convenience store was unable to be reached Thursday.