

# Doctor not guilty in sex case

A jury rejects charges that a Largo physician touched several patients inappropriately.

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LARGO — Dr. Kayode Sotonwa said “I just want to thank God” after a jury found him not guilty of touching his patients in ways that could have sent him to prison for 17 years.

The 43-year-old doctor was acquitted Wednesday of felony sexual battery and two misdemeanor counts of battery. After the verdict was read, he put his head in his hands and wiped tears from his eyes.

Sotonwa was arrested by Largo

police last year after a female patient complained that he had touched her inappropriately. Sotonwa had about 300 patients at the time, including many who were referred by Pinellas County social services officials.

After Largo police began their investigation, they discovered more people who said Sotonwa had mistreated them. At one point, as many as 16 complaints had been made against him, prosecutors said.

But the state charged him in just four of those cases and then



**Dr. Kayode Sotonwa says he wants to resume his career, but somewhere other than Largo.**

dropped one of those.

In one of the three remaining cases, he was accused of inserting his finger into the vagina of a patient when it was not medically necessary for him to do so, without wearing the protective gloves a physician normally use. In another, he was accused of cupping his hand and touching a woman's breast, in the guise of

inspecting a “skin tag.”

And in some cases, Assistant State Attorney Magda McSwain said, he did these things when he should have been taking a serious look at patients' real medical conditions. Sotonwa denied doing anything inappropriate. Defense attorney George Tragos said the doctor's accusers were not credible, and some had been delusional and had abused drugs.

He presented evidence that he said showed a nurse had been in the room when one of the incidents took place, though the accuser said only she and the doctor had been present.

Sotonwa took the stand in his

own defense earlier this week, speaking about his credentials and lauding his own medical accomplishments in a manner prosecutors would later call arrogant.

At one point he objected to the way McSwain phrased a question, “unless you tell me you have a degree in medicine.” McSwain referred to that comment in her closing arguments, saying, “I got him to show his true colors.”

Sotonwa essentially stopped practicing medicine for the past year, but now said he is eager to resume his work as a doctor — some place outside of Largo, where the Police Department built its case against him.