

Japan Olympic swim hope Ikee diagnosed with leukaemia

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File picture of Japan's Rikako Ikee (AP)

Tokyo: Japan's swim queen Rikako Ikee, a genuine gold medal hope at next year's Tokyo Olympics, has been diagnosed with leukaemia, the 18-year-old tweeted on Tuesday.

In a shock announcement, Ikee said: "After feeling unwell I returned in haste from Australia and following tests I was diagnosed with leukaemia. I still can't believe it myself and I'm in a state of confusion."

Ikee captured a record six gold medals at last year's Asian Games to fire a warning for the 2020 Olympics in her home city, where she has been tipped to push for gold on several fronts, in particular in the women's 100 metres butterfly.

Japan's swimming superstar assured fans she was determined to beat her illness.

"I will devote myself to my treatment and strive to be able to show an even stronger Rikako Ikee."

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