

## John Tefertiller Health Update - 16 November 2009

Dear Friends and Family,

### Check-out Lines and Ambulances

This is a lesson learned the hard way.

On Sunday November 15th I had eaten early in the afternoon, but I wasn't paying attention to the passing time— watching football, etc. Late, I realized I needed to pick up a few items for the next few days, so I took off for the store. I had no idea that I was as far gone as I was. While I was at the supermarket, I could feel myself growing very tired, very quickly, so I curtailed my shopping and headed to the check-out line. While waiting in line I faded completely and fainted— twice. Paramedics were called, and I was transported to Eden Hospital where I was put on an intravenous hydration drip while other things were also checked out— an EKG and a CAT scan of my head to be sure there were no heart or stroke issues.

They warn you, don't they, to keep hydrated and to eat regularly, 5 or 6 small meals a day, and not to overdo it with activity. I am pretty good at avoiding activity, but I goofed up on the food and drink part— badly, as it turned out. This is not an adventure I want to repeat any time soon.

### Next Phase

Tomorrow, Monday the 23rd, I am to scheduled to begin chemotherapy treatments. The treatment is a three drug “chemical cocktail” administered in two parts: an intravenous chemical drip for a couple of hours at the doctor's office and wearing of a drug pump for a couple of days following. This pattern will be repeated approximately once every two weeks for the next four months.

The subject of side effects garners all kinds of responses from “expect this, that and the other” to “you may not experience any significant changes.” It remains to be seen. Having been made aware of the “worst case” possibilities eases the prospect somewhat by allowing me to know what is happening if and when it does happen.

### My State of Mind

This has been an overwhelming whirlwind ride, from diagnosis through surgery, and now entering into the follow up chemotherapy treatments. And, of course, there is yet another surgery ahead to reverse the colostomy (which I have labeled as “my new best friend.”) I don't know how others endure, but I can say that trusting God has been the only thing that I have been able to cling to as events have unfolded.

There are mounting expenses (some Big Scary Numbers!), but I cannot afford to give money much thought beyond taking the next steps. Learning to live with the colostomy has been interesting, but I am looking forward to having it reversed, and having my bodily functions return to normal. While my diet is relatively unrestricted, it will be nice to return to a “normal” eating schedule without fear of fainting. These things one takes for granted until a major health crisis is encountered.

### What You Can Pray For

1. Pray that I will maintain constant trust in the Lord. He is faithful. He knows the end from the beginning and will bring his plans to completion.
2. Pray for the effectiveness of the chemotherapy treatments, that they will not produce complications, and that the side effects will be minimal.
3. Pray, as always, for God's provision on the financial side of things. He already knows the need, but he is waiting for us to come to him as children come to their father.

## Final Thoughts

I want to express my thanks once again to everyone who lifts up my name before the throne of God. It seems that almost every week I learn of someone new that is praying for me regularly, and often they involve their families and their churches in prayer for me. I cannot put into words how that affects me. It is humbling to know that God has put me on the hearts and minds of so many, and in so many places.

This is a very difficult time for me, and not just physically. It is tempting to get into the “Why me?” mentality, or to become weary of the new routines that are imposed on me by my physical condition. And I dare not start thinking about money- it seems that every time I turn around there is a new expense being added to the already long list.

Giving of thanks to God would seem to be the universal remedy to such circumstances. Oh, I voice my complaints to him, but I try to always do as the Bible writers did, and follow the pouring out of my emotions with the heaping on of praise and thanksgiving. Jeremiah 3:21-26, Psalm 13. These are examples of giving praise and expressing trust and thanksgiving in adversity. So, may God be praised not only for what he has done, but for who he is. He is worthy of all praise— if I never received one benefit more, he has provided eternal life through Jesus Christ, and that is worth more than all the comfort and success this life could ever offer.

With warmest affections to all,

John T.