

23 Sept AD 2025

Greetings,

Since many of you have been concerned and supportive since I let you know about my leukemia, I wanted to give you an update. As mentioned, I have a type of blood cancer called chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). It is a slow growing cancer that I've had for years. Last spring it became necessary to begin an aggressive treatment.

With the advances of cancer research, there are now two treatment options. The first is "traditional chemo-therapy" and the latest is "targeted therapy." The traditional chemo-therapy is the infusion by IV and it's like a shot-gun that blasts a wide pattern. Basically, by way of the blood-stream, it hits all cells in the body. That is why there's hair loss, wretched nausea and weakness.

The other option is targeted therapy and it is directed at the specific cells that are causing the CLL to advance. This treatment is now given in pills that target a specific cell type. However, it's not like a sniper rifle that kills those bad cells, but more like a tranquilizer gun that puts the bad cells to sleep. Once asleep, they can't produce the protein that triggers the continued growth of the leukemia.

Since the first of July I have been taking the pills in the targeted therapy. I have to take these pills for the rest of my life. Morning and evening, I have to keep those bad cells tranquilized. :) While I've been blessed by not having the severe side effects of traditional chemo-therapy (like hair loss, etc.) there are real side effects of the pills I'm taking. One of the main ones is low immunity. My ability to fight off viruses (virii sp?) is quite low, especially to shingles. As a result, I have to take anti-virus pills along with the other pills.

All of this being said, I am the blessed recipient of the advances that cancer research has made, and of your words of care and encouragement. May God be glorified in all of this.

Peace in Christ to one and all,

Pastor McCoy