

My name is Michael Maita, I am 42 years old and Married to my beautiful and loving wife Sheila (she's in her 30's). I was a Marine stationed at Camp Lejeune from 1984-1987. In early September 2008 I had allergy or cold like symptoms so I went to my Family Doctor; she told me that because I am in my forties now that she wanted to get a chest X-ray just to make sure everything is ok. A few days later my Doctor called me and said there was something in the x-ray, and that I needed to come see her. Well that something turned out to be a tumor, and after some tests, (PET Scan, Biopsy and etc.) I was diagnosed with Stage 4 Lung Cancer.

Up until that point of my life I was asymptomatic. Approximately 2 weeks after I was diagnosed with cancer I received a letter from the Department of the Navy, Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, advising me of the registry that they have regarding the Camp Lejeune Water Contamination Study. I went online and did some research, which brought me right to the Few the Proud the Forgotten. I must say that my entire family and I were, and we still are, completely in shock. We can't believe that it took so many years for the U.S. Marine Corps, the V.A. or any office in the U.S. Government to just notify us so that we could get annual checkups. Did they ever hear the term "Early Detection?" That could have saved so many lives.

So as for my treatments I have had Cyberknife Radio-surgery, Aggressive Chemo-Therapy and Chest Radiation Therapy (same timeframe). Then, after not eating solid for 7 weeks I was admitted Mercer Hospital in Trenton. I had lost almost 60 lbs. and had to get a special twenty- four hour IV fluid (photo in photo gallery). On top of that my Neurologist ordered a MRI and after that he told me that I had new lesions in my brain; so while I was hospitalized I had to have Full Brain Radiation Therapy, and we have to wait four more weeks to find out if that worked or not; In other words if I am going to live through this or not.

All I can hope for now, besides surviving cancer (which I have no idea if I will at this point), is that the VA wakes up and approves my claim. I gave them a copy of the letter from the Marine Corps, along with a long letter from my Oncologist who specifically wrote that the cause of my cancer is with most certainty due to the water contamination at Camp Lejeune.

I pray for everyone affected by this. I also pray that President Obama has the Integrity I believed him to have when I voted for him. I believe he is a truly honest and honorable, and I am looking forward to seeing him helping all of us whose lives have been impacted by the Camp Lejeune water contamination.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Michael A. Maita  
New Jersey