



United, we can kill cancer

I was looking around Old Trafford the other day, and it dawned on me: 'One in three of these magnificent fans will die from cancer.' The North Stand would be empty. My Mum and Dad both died from lung cancer - my Dad had colon cancer, too. My brother, Martin, has thankfully recovered from prostate cancer.

Cancer could get me .. or you. The thought of any cancer fills me with dread. Lung cancer. Stomach. Bladder. Pancreatic. What about mouth or throat cancer? I know how much the surgeon would rip out if that was to be my fate. What about brain tumours?

The chemo, radiotherapy and surgery treatments can seem worse than living with and having the cancer.

Two years ago everyone in the club was searching for a cancer cure that could help Dave Rennison - a 'Gentle Giant' of a man so well known to everyone at the club. He had pancreatic cancer. Eight thousand people die of this cancer every year. Few survive.

When we came across a new type of treatment with no chemical poisoning, all of us hoped that Dave would be able to have it - Photodynamic Therapy.

PDT is killing some cancers now with a single treatment that takes just minutes, and with few major side-effects.

A light-sensitive drug is activated in the tumour by light with pin-point accuracy. It knocks out the oxygen supply to the tumour just long enough to kill it. It's approved and

available now on the NHS for skin, head and neck cancers, mouth cancers and cancers in the oesophagus.

PDT is treating patients now in trials for prostate, bile duct and early lung cancer. Breast cancer is another target where they hope half of all patients will be able to avoid having a mastectomy with PDT. The Christie in Manchester is a leading centre for vulval and penile cancer PDT.

But all these trials are desperately short of funds. The PDT trial for arterial and heart disease was stopped years ago. The work on bladder, stomach, colon and several others have never even started. Sadly for Dave, the medical teams haven't had the money to develop this amazing therapy for pancreatic cancer.

I wish that PDT had been available for Dave and my parents. We can't change the past, but we can change the future. If one million Manchester United fans all donated £10, the medics could maybe get PDT approved and in use for pancreatic, throat, breast and lung cancer.

To donate, please click on the KILLING Cancer logo to go to the charity's website, or post your donation to the address below. We can make the difference. We can create one of the most successful, winning teams - this one dedicated to defeating cancer. I've made my donation. Please join me.

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