



Former army medic 'poisoned by uranium in Iraq' raises £100,000 for life-saving treatment

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A former Army medic who developed deadly 'Gulf War Syndrome' after being exposed to uranium in Iraq has raised £100,000 for life-saving treatment – with just hours to spare.

Katrina Brown, 31, was exposed to depleted uranium – radioactive dust in bombs in bullets – while treating injured comrades at a field hospital in the war zone in 2003.

After years of failing health she was diagnosed with debilitating immune disorder systemic sclerosis – so rare that neither the NHS or the MoD recognise or treat sufferers.



Katrina Brown, 31, has raised 100,000 for life-saving treatment after suffering Uranium poisoning in Iraq

Doctors in America told the brave Army wife she could have pioneering treatment in Chicago to reboot her immune system, but the life-saving procedure would cost a whopping £100,000.

Determined Katrina was forced to book the stem cell procedure despite still needing to raise the money because doctors have told her time is running out.

But with the help of friends and family she was able to pay the up-front bill on Saturday – just a few hours before the deadline – and heads to Chicago at the end of the month for 77 days of treatment.

Katrina, from South Cerney, Glos., said: "I met the target on the very last day possible.

"I have now paid the hospital and I am counting down the days until I fly."

In an online message to the hundreds of people who had supported her appeal, she added: "I can now officially say a huge 'thank you' to everyone who has been involved in my fundraising journey.

“I absolutely cannot stress how grateful I am to everyone. Each and everyone one of you has played a part in saving my life and I will be forever grateful.”

Katrina thinks she was exposed to the highly poisonous material – used to increase the penetrative power of bombs and bullets – when she was sent to a derelict airstrip called Shaibah, seven miles from Basra.

It contained dumped tanks blown up by uranium-enhanced weapons in the 1991 war.

Before flying home she was handed a white plastic card by Army officials saying she could have been exposed to dust containing depleted uranium during her deployment and should inform her GP.

But the young medic feared the complaint would be put on her medical records and could possibly stop her getting life insurance or a mortgage.

Four years later she visited her doctors because she was feeling constantly cold and numb, with aches and pains all over her body.

She was diagnosed with systemic sclerosis – a condition provoked by proximity to toxic chemicals but not treated or recognised by the MoD.

The rare disease of the blood vessels and immune system means her body produces collagen which binds the body tissues together, attacking and hardening her organs, skin and joints.

Katrina travelled to Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago – the world’s leading treatment centre which is filled with US Army Veterans from Iraq – in October 2012.

Doctors said her condition would eventually kill – probably in around a year – unless she has the £100,000 treatment which would see her stem cells blasted with chemotherapy to reboot her immune system by tricking her body into thinking she is well.

The army wife and her pals raised cash through calendars, head shaves, cycle rides and marathon runs.

Brave Katrina said: “It can potentially kill me, I’ll be left with literally no immune system. I know that, but I don’t have much choice.

“But I’ve seen the other people who have had what I have and they’ve had the treatment, and they are a real inspiration.”