



## Katherine's Diary

THE reception class teacher from Burton, who is battling against leukaemia, has described in her own words daily life in her fight against the disease.

Katherine Sinfield, 33, of Balfour Street, needs daily doses of antibiotics, fungal drips and blood transfusions after being diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukaemia in April.

She remained in hospital, in Birmingham, for seven weeks after doctors said her only hope of survival was to receive a bone marrow transplant.

In June, the News Telegraph launched its Take Five Minutes campaign in a bid to locate a suitable donor, not just for Katherine, but for anyone who is in her position.

Here, Katherine describes life currently out of and her daily battle against cancer.

For more information on how to become a bone marrow donor, call the National Blood Service Donor helpline on 0300 123 2323.

### Wednesday September 11

My involvement with so many health

services means that life can be pretty chaotic and unpredictable.

Take for example a telephone call at 12.45 today telling me that a space at the emergency dental clinic had become available - and so we needed to be at the Stockland Green Health Centre in the Erdington region of Birmingham by 3.30pm.

Admittedly, events like this would be frantic for most people but we have become more accustomed to these unpredictable days - we do of course have to drive around with a hospital bag in the boot of the car at all times just in case I take a funny turn.

As for the dentist... Everything went fine.

### Thursday September 12

It was back to Birmingham for another routine clinic appointment.

My white cell count is now climbing steadily back to what is a normal level and so the dosage of my new tablets has been increased. As these tablets have caused me a few side-effects, I just hope this increased dose doesn't mean more or worse effects.

A skin specialist also checked the wound on my back and it looks as though everything is heading in the right direction - helped in part by my increased white cells.

For the social media lovers, I have also set up a Twitter account. This diary will continue as always, the aim of the Twitter feed is to raise greater awareness of blood cancers and the charities battling to combat the disease - principally, useful information I cannot fit into these updates. You can follow me at @Leukaemia\_and\_K.

### Friday September 13

I'm pleased to say that with copious amounts of E45 cream, my rash is behaving - even though I am on higher dose medication.

I've also been experimenting more with my wig and after lots of trial and error, I'm beginning to get used to wearing it - hair nets and hair clips are the answer along with a lot of patience.

Yesterday I mentioned I had set up a Twitter page @Leukaemia\_and\_K.

I'm new to this world of social media and so I am gradually getting to grips with it and I'm slowly building followers. Thank you if you are one of those.

### Saturday September 14

Today was a very rare change for me - we went off to London for a wedding. The Houses of Parliament to be precise.

Of course I had to be armed with a bag full of medicines and my emergency medical card just in case I was taken ill, but we made it.

Choosing what to wear is now made increasingly tricky because of my Hickman Line - anything too low-cut

and you can see the dressing over where the tubes protrude.

A new technique of hair nets and hair clips also meant that I managed to wear my wig and a hat all day - and until I told them, nobody even knew it was a wig.

There comes a time when people ask you where you had your hair done, that you have to break it to them that it came out of a box.

### Sunday September 15

Times may be tough, but it is good to see so many people doing great things

for charity.

Yesterday while in London I saw lots of riders from the Bikeathon ride held to raise funds for the Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research charity.

While in Newcastle, the Great North Run would have helped raise funds for hundreds of different charities.

It will soon be time for our own charity fund-raisers to get pedalling and get running to raise cash for Cure Leukaemia.

Please dig deep and sponsor Rob Smyth and Geoff Merryweather on the Just Giving site.



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