

Agent Orange Exposure Still Haunts Vietnam Veterans, But Hope Remains

In my first article for veterans, I spoke specifically on the issue of PTSD in American veterans. During my research, I discovered that post-traumatic stress disorder can impact a person for an entire lifetime. In my own situation, I experienced post-traumatic stress disorder in the first few years back from my service in Vietnam. Surprisingly, PTSD resurfaced in my life 50 years later. This occurred when I decided to write on my experiences in Vietnam and the issues facing American veterans today relating to Agent Orange and PTSD. If you or someone you know is struggling with either of these service-connected issues, please contact the Veterans Administration.

Agent Orange exposure is making a significant impact on the lives of many veterans who served in Vietnam. This chemical herbicide was sprayed on the trees and vegetation in the jungles of Vietnam. It's purpose was to kill the dense foliage where the Viet Cong would hide and conceal their weapons and supplies from military detection. The use of Agent Orange was discontinued in 1969 when it was determined that the toxic chemical in this herbicide was causing cancer in animals. The scientific community advised our military that Agent Orange could cause the same results in our military personnel in Vietnam.

Sadly, many Vietnam veterans have faced severe physical issues related to contact with Agent Orange. It is impossible to know how many Vietnam veterans have died due to illnesses incurred from their exposure to the Veterans Administration has been treating Vietnam veterans with exposure to Agent Orange for decades. Personally, I was exposed to Agent Orange from March

1967 through March 1968. It was nearly 50 years later when I was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, aka bone marrow cancer. My doctor asked if I had been exposed to Agent Orange when I served in Vietnam. He suggested that I contact the Department of Veterans Affairs to obtain assistance with the cost of my treatments. Thankfully, the Veterans Administration accepted responsibility for my diagnosis. They approved my disability rating and have been supplying medications for over five years. The cost of my required medications to treat multiple myeloma are in excess of \$140,000 per year. I thank the Lord for strengthening me during this challenging time. My doctor had told me, without help I had only six months to live. That was five years ago. Praise the Lord for His divine touch on my life.

The purpose of this article is to bring awareness to those who were exposed to Agent Orange. Imagine how many Vietnam veterans may be unaware of their right to obtain help from the Veterans Administration due to their exposure to Agent Orange. There are numerous other medical conditions our Vietnam veterans may be facing today due to an encounter with this deadly herbicide. I strongly suggest that if you are aware of any Vietnam veteran who has been diagnosed with cancers of the blood to contact the Veterans Administration for assistance. The Department of Veteran Affairs will provide a list of other Agent Orange caused cancers and physical diseases.

Another one of my concerns is the lack of our government to be proactive in locating those individuals who may be suffering from Agent Orange related issues. It took nearly 50 years for the disease to break forth in my body. Yet, during that time, the Veterans Administration made no attempt to check me for a potential disease related to Agent Orange exposure.

Help Our Veterans

Now, what should we all do to help our veterans? Pray for our veterans. Volunteer at a veterans hospital. Contact our

representatives in Congress and tell them to act on this issue. Tell a Vietnam veteran “welcome home” and “thank you for your service.”

Heavenly Father, I pray your blessings would be upon American veterans. Father help us to reach out to the veterans in our community to let them know that you love them and have a plan for their lives. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

John 15:13 (NLT) says, “There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

If you’d like additional information about my writings on Vietnam, please go to my website at [www.davidcfriend.com](#). Also, be sure to listen to the *Quality Christian Living with David C. Friend* podcast on Charisma Podcast Network for other practical steps to create a quality Christian life according to God’s principles.

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