

Sen. John McCain Receives Tragic News

Following his surgery last week for a blood clot found on the front of his brain, U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., received the worst-case prognosis from doctors.

The 80-year-old former Vietnam War POW has an aggressive form of brain cancer and needs immediate treatment. The Mayo Clinic in Phoenix released the following statement Wednesday night:

Subsequent tissue pathology revealed that a primary brain tumor known as a glioblastoma was associated with the blood clot. Scanning done since the procedure (a minimally invasive craniotomy with an eyebrow incision) shows that the tissue of concern was completely resected by imaging criteria.

The senator and his family are reviewing further treatment options with his Mayo Clinic care team. Treatment options may include a combination of chemotherapy and radiation. The senator's doctors say he is recovering from his surgery "amazingly well," and his underlying health is excellent.

Glioblastoma is the most aggressive form of brain cancer, which can cause personality changes, nausea, seizures and symptoms similar to those of a stroke. Even with treatment, it will return. The average life expectancy following diagnosis is less than 18 months. The same form of cancer was the cause of death of Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass.

The senator's office released the following additional statement:

Senator McCain appreciates the outpouring of support he has received over the last few days. He is in good spirits as he continues to recover at home with his family in Arizona.

He is grateful to the doctors and staff at Mayo Clinic for their outstanding care, and is confident that any future treatment will be effective. Further consultations with Senator McCain's Mayo Clinic care team will indicate when he will return to the United States Senate.

Calls to lift up McCain in prayer immediately poured in. The 2008 Republican presidential nominee's running mate, former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, issued the following statement:

John McCain is one tough fighter—we know he'll face this diagnosis with courage and strength. Our family continues to lift John and his family up in prayer.

McCain's daughter, Meghan, who is one of the hosts of FOX News Channel's *Outnumbered* program, issued her own statement as well:

The news of my father's illness has affected every one of us in the McCain family. My grandmother, mother, brothers, sister and I have all endured the shock of the news, and now we live with the anxiety about what comes next. It is an experience familiar to us, given my father's previous battle with cancer—and it is familiar to the countless America families whose loved ones were also stricken with the tragedy of disease and the inevitability of age. If we could ask anything of anyone now, it would be the prayers of those of you who understand this all too well. We would be so grateful for them.

It won't surprise you to learn that in all this, the one of us who is most confident and calm is my father. He is the toughest person I know. The cruelest enemy could not break him. The aggressions of political life could not bend him. So he is meeting this challenge as he has every other. Cancer may afflict him in many ways, but it will not make him surrender. Nothing ever has.

My love for my father is boundless, and like any daughter,

I cannot and do not wish to be in a world without him. I have faith that those days remain far away. Yet even in this moment, my fears for him are overwhelmed by one thing above all: gratitude for our years together, and the years still to come. He is a warrior at dusk, one of the greatest Americans of our age, and the worthy heir to his father's and grandfather's name. But to me, he is something more. He is my strength, my example, my refuge, my confidante, my teacher, my rock, my hero—my dad.

McCain is likely to be away from the Senate for many weeks as he undergoes treatment, dwindling the Republican Party's control in the Senate down to just one seat. This makes it even more difficult to get critical pieces of legislation and presidential nominations through the chamber's arcane debate rules. {eo}