



Fire Fighter Cancer Awareness and Prevention



SURVIVOR STORY: BRETT MATTSON

Chino Valley, CA Local 3522 / Fire Fighter & Paramedic
Diagnosed with spindle cell melanoma stage 4 in 2019



Brett Mattson is a fire fighter/paramedic with the Chino Valley Fire District in Chino, California, with 12 years on the job as of 2021. He is also a HazMat Specialist and member of the USAR team.

In July 2019, Brett was diagnosed with rare spindle cell melanoma (SCM), Stage 4. Brett's radiation oncologist told him he had maybe one year to live. Brett was 37 years old at the time of his diagnosis.

Brett was working on shift and felt immense back pain, which he and his doctor's thought was orthopedic in nature. Brett underwent spine surgery to correct the issue and that is when Brett's cancer was discovered. In addition to surgery, Brett underwent immunotherapy treatment at the John Wayne Cancer Institute in Santa Monica and radiation therapy at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange, California.

Through much prayer, excellent doctors, medical treatment and determination, Brett was in full remission only five months later. He is now back to work full-time and continues with his follow-up care.

Because of his experience, including how the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN) was there for him throughout his diagnosis and treatment, Brett has become both a mentor and a Department Liaison for the FCSN.

