

Cancer Cures: Heal Yourself and Save Your Life

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By Syndicated Columnist Cathy Harris

Even though I have never been diagnosed with cancer, it doesn't mean cancer is not growing inside of my body at this very minute. However, cancer has played a major role in my life. In 2007, my two best friends died 6 months apart from each other with lung and colon cancer. As a matter of fact, one of them spoke at the other one's funeral. Little did he know that in 6 months he too would be laying in a coffin dead from cancer.

After they died, I became extremely sick. I thought simply because they had died of cancer that I too was infected with cancer. I later found out that one's environment plays a major role in why they succumb to cancer. I knew that I had to educate myself on why cancer took my friends and how I had to stop it from taking other people that I deeply cared about.

So I set out on a journey to educate myself about cancer. Even though the path through understanding cancer requires work and discipline, it is also filled with discoveries that will excite and motivate you. For anyone who has been diagnosed with cancer, the goal is to keep your focus on those joys.

The way I conducted extensive research and educated myself: 1) Went to the library, 2) Went to bookstores, 3) Ordered books online (amazon.com, etc.), 4) Conducted research on goggle.com and yahoo.com, 5) Spoke with holistic and natural healers and others who worked at health food stores, 6) Networked with others in support groups who had survived cancer, 7) Listened to health seminars and workshops online and in the community, etc.

I quickly found out there were tons of information out there on cancer but usually most information is invisible to people unless it contained some topic that affected them directly. I guess I was the same. Until my friends died of cancer, I had never really noticed how much information or groups were out there dealing with cancer. I also found out that everyone knew at least 2 people who were either living with cancer or who had died from cancer.

The information I found out was so eye-opening. Most holistic and natural healers were already set up and educating people about cancer but many of these people were looked at by the community and the medical profession as quacks. But what I really found out was that the reason the medical profession looked at these people as quacks were that they were actually healing people and since the medical industry was big business, it was really their goal to keep people sick.

I also found out that the medical profession had even run many of these holistic and natural healers out of the country to countries such as Mexico, Jamaica, etc.

Years ago many people ate healthier, maintaining their own gardens and purchasing food from peddlers on the side of the road who had grown these foods without pesticides. But now because so many people were sick and overweight from eating processed foods, there was a major need for holistic and natural healers to set up these types of businesses. I do believe in the future that there will be even more of a rising need for these types of professions.

There are more than 100 types of cancers, each having its own genetic characteristics. The very first alarming fact that I found out about cancer were that all cancers were the same -- whether it was breast cancer, prostate cancer, colon cancer, brain cancer, lung cancer, bone cancer, skin cancer, etc. -- it's was all the same. It was a mutation of the cells or the mutation of genes resulting in the irregular growth of abnormal cells. Healthy cells of the body grow in predictable patterns. As they wear out, they are replaced in an orderly manner by just the right number of new healthy cells. Cancerous cells grow in uncontrolled and unpredictable patterns which threatens the entire body. The cells themselves are mutant, changed in a way that limits their function.

A second dimension of cancer is its being a symptom of an inefficient immune system. Your immune system is the first and most powerful defense your body has against cancer. For years you have produced mutant cells that were potentially cancerous, but the immune system was there to "clean up" the problems. But now it has ceased doing so in an efficient enough manner to ensure your health. So strengthening your immune system will be a key to your recovery from cancer.

I also learned that the two major factors that played a major role in people being diagnosed with cancer were: 1) Their environments, and 2) Their diets. I learned that that cancers are hereditary, meaning there is a predisposition to the disease but had to be triggered by the environment. It made sense that cancer was hereditary because most families have the same eating habits and live in the same environments.

Cancers can develop from free radicals that harm DNA or the immune system. Free radicals are created as the result of an oxidative process triggered by sources such as chemical toxins and certain fats in the diet; chemicals including pesticides, herbicides, toxins in household products, food dyes and cigarette smoke; and as a result of radiation exposure from, for example, X-rays, nuclear waste, electronic instruments and dental enamel caps.

Cancer-causing substances stress the immune system and may take 5 to 30 years from the time of exposure. The goal is to live in an environment that does not allow cancer to grow or breed.

Cancer is a serious illness but it is not necessarily fatal. If you catch it on time, you do have the luxury of some time. Therefore, if you have been diagnosed with cancer, take a deep breath and look at the actions you need to take in your life.

Basically in order to heal yourself from cancer, you will have to clean up your environment. Remember there are two environments: 1) Your outside environment, and 2) Your inside environment. You need to clean up both environments in order for your body to heal from cancer.

- **Outside Environment:** Many times outside environments are the direct causes of many cancers. Sometimes you can't do anything about your outside environment unless you stay away from certain areas or even pick up and move to other areas. If you live by a lot of power lines, toxic dump sites, factories or other buildings or busy streets with heavy traffic that pollute the air, or if your bedroom faces a parking lot, then you might have to move. To keep toxic car fumes, which can cause cancer, out of your home, if your garage is attached to your home then do not park your car in your garage. If you park your car in the garage then never enter your home from the garage door but instead seal it off and enter through the front of the house.
 - **Inside Environment:** If you have been diagnosed with cancer, in order to heal yourself you need to live in a healing environment just like in a hospital.
1. **YOUR BODY:** In order to clean up your inside environment let's look at what you are putting on the "insides" and "outside" of your body.
 - **Detoxify Your Body:** Cancer spreads to other parts of the body by the way of the blood or lymphatic vessels. One of the major reasons that people die from cancer is because when they are diagnosed with cancer, it has already metastasized (attached itself) to an organ in their bodies. The reason that it has metastasized is because their organs are already compromised (clogged and barely functional) from years of ignoring them by eating processed foods or not detoxing them. To detoxify means the metabolic process by which toxins are changed into less toxic or more readily excretable substances. Toxins are constantly coming into our bodies through the water we drink, foods we eat and air we breathe. And the only way to keep these toxins moving out of our bodies is through our skin by sweating, urine or waste.

Just because you don't have any pain from your organs, doesn't mean they are operating at 100%. Even if they were operating at 30% you might not have any pain. But if one organ fails, they all fail because your organs work as a team or group. And in the black community we do not donate organs! So the goal is to hang onto the organs you have and keep them healthy.

There are 3 organs that detoxifies the entire body: 1) your intestines, 2) your liver, and 3) your kidneys. You can clean out these organs by using a good detox program 2 or 3 times a year, which you can find at a local neighborhood health food store. A natural daily laxative and detox for your intestines includes organic spinach, organic carrots, and distilled water in a blender or juicer

especially first thing in the morning.

- **Eat Antioxidants:** Since cancer is a mutation of the cells, the best way to regenerate and grow new cells are by eating organic raw fruits and vegetables containing antioxidants. If you have been diagnosed with cancer or just want to stay healthy, you should try to eat up to 75% or more of these types of foods a day. To get the biggest benefits of antioxidants, eat these foods raw or lightly steamed; don't overcook or boil. You can buy a blender or juicer and blend, juice or steam your food (fruits and vegetables). Once you blend or juice foods, the nutrients and enzymes, go directly into your system by skipping the digestive process. You can also drink a green drink everyday which releases serotonin in the brain which gives you energy and makes you feel good. The three major antioxidant vitamins are beta-carotene, vitamin C, and vitamin E. You'll find them in colorful fruits and vegetables especially those with purple, blue, red, orange, and yellow hues. If you are not getting enough antioxidants in your diet then you can take a Vitamin C supplement which is the single most important supplement you can take. Vitamin C with bioflavonoids can be found in berries, broccoli, brussels sprout, cantaloupe, cauliflower, grapefruit, honeydew, kale, kiwi, mangoes, nectarines, orange, papaya, red, green or yellow peppers, snow peas, sweet potato, strawberries, and tomatoes. Vitamin E is key for strong immunity and healthy skin and eyes and in recent years, Vitamin E supplements have become popular as antioxidants which include vegetable oils, green leafy vegetables, like spinach, eggs, nuts, and other foods, etc.
- **Stop Eating Processed and Mucus-Producing Foods:** Processed foods (any foods in a package, box, bag, etc.) and mucus-producing foods (eggs, chocolate, dairy products, fried foods, etc.) causes slight or severe allergic reactions which causes your insides to become "inflamed" and "swollen." Your body can't heal from cancer if it is inflamed or swollen all the time so cut these foods out of your diet completely. Make sure you eat Pineapple or Papaya everyday on an empty stomach which contains bromelain to keep down inflammation in your body.
- **Throw Away Microwave:** Be wise using plastics in microwaves or throw out your microwave which causes cancer. Remember the goal is to eat organic raw foods, lightly steamed, blended or juiced.
- **Drink The Right Type of Water:** Drink only "distilled" or "pure (purified)" water. Other water causes you become dehydrated and water from a faucet or refrigerator even using a filter has metals and this is why so many black people have alzheimers.
- **Get Rid of Personal Care Products with PROP Word:** Get rid of personal care products containing toxic chemicals especially the ones with the PROP word that allows cancers and other diseases to enter your body. Basically, you need to get rid of every product that has the ingredients that starts with or contains the PROP word especially these products - propamide, propacetamide, propyl gallate,

calcium propionate, propanol, isopropyl alcohol, etc. These products such as lotions, creams, soaps, perfumes, aftershaves, etc., can also get into your body and cause you to feel sick, tired, sluggish and run-down causing it extremely hard to heal from cancer. Remember anything that you put on your skin goes directly to your bloodstream or organs. Make sure you read labels because many products sold as natural contain highly toxic ingredients. Instead of putting cocoa butter lotion, baby oil with lanolin and other products on your body, you should only use “cold-pressed olive oil” on your skin and use natural products on your hair and other parts of your body. Olive oil is also good for cooking, putting in salads and other dishes, polishing furniture, etc.

- **Cleaning Your Clothes:** When washing clothes use a natural washing powder such as baking soda washing powders and when you dry clean your clothes allow them to air out before you wear them because of the toxic chemicals they use to clean them.
- **Exercise:** Leading a sedentary or inactive lifestyle is one of the reasons that many people come down with cancer in the first place. Cancer survivors believe strongly in the importance of exercise. They emphasize the need for regular physical activity such as swimming, biking, walking, aerobics, yoga, strength training, etc. If you have been diagnosed with cancer, you can even start an exercise program while confined to a hospital bed or in a wheelchair by doing full-body stretches in bed and lifting weights from chairs. Because of the way you breathe when you do yoga, it helps you regrow and regenerate new cells so it's highly recommended for people with cancer. Also jumping up and down on a trampoline will help you regenerate new cells because of the way you breathe. You can buy a small trampoline from a used sports equipment store or many gyms use this piece of equipment.
- **Get Plenty of Rest:** Getting enough rest will be key to your recovery from cancer. The body uses sleep as a means of healing itself so don't have too much going on in your bedroom. Get the television, stereo and bright lights out of that room and try to go to sleep the same time every night.

2. **YOUR HOME:**

- **Indoor Allergies and Air Pollution:** Indoor allergies such as “bed and dust mites” will keep you from living in a healing environment so get rid of them by washing your bed covers every week, changing pillows every few months and changing mattresses every few years. Use electric logs in fireplaces and clean up water spills before mold or mildew can grow. Get rid of all plants especially in the bedroom that sheds a “fungi” and use a “humidifier” or “air purifier” to help clean up the air. You can also clean up your inside air by opening your windows for 10 minutes every day and try to use high-efficiency air filters for your air-conditioning and heating system and change them every 3 months.

- **Use Non-Toxic Products in Your Home:** You can clean your entire home with non-toxic products such as “baking soda” and “white distilled vinegar.” You can use both of these products to clean sinks, bathtubs, floors, etc. Get rid of anything that smells in your home such as air fresheners or scented candles and other harsh toxic cleaning products (comet, pinesol, spray cleaners, aerosols, etc.). These toxic products are one of the major reasons young kids come down with cancer so get rid of them.
- **Take Off Shoes:** You should always take off your shoes when you enter your home otherwise you can track in pollutants and other chemicals that will get struck in your carpet and release toxic chemicals in the air.
- **Manage Pest Safely:** Pesticides contains neurotoxins that keep your brain from functioning so try to use natural chemicals verses toxic chemicals.
- **Store Old Paints Away from Living Area:** Many people have a storage area in their homes or garages that contain toxic chemicals that can reach their living areas so make sure you store these toxic products such a paints away from living areas.

Other Steps to Take and Understand After the Cancer Diagnosis:

1. **Social Support:**

The goal is to have a great support system and healing environment in place while you recover. Cancer survivors should invest more time and emotional energy in relationships that nurture them and invest less in those that are toxic, destructive and negative. If you find out you have cancer you need to seriously look at your financial situation to see if you need to relocate and move in with family so you can take the necessary steps to save your life. Your concentrated efforts must be directed toward your mental, emotional and spiritual practices if you wish to optimize your chances of recovery. Enhancing self-healing is done not so much through medical treatment as it is through your own choices -- your physical, emotional, and spiritual lifestyle. The goal is to enter into a “lifestyle therapy” initiating a whole-person recovery effort. Thousands of survivors demonstrate entirely new spirit; they become new people. For many, it is a radical but serene response to recovery and to life. It’s discovering the divinity within; experiencing inner peace.

2. **Create a Wellness and Recovery Journal:**

You’ll find yourself clipping newspaper and magazine articles about cancer. Put them in your journal. This will become your primary source book, a reference manual for your personal and individualized cancer recovery program. As you conduct research questions will come to mind. Write them down and ask your medical team! Questions to ask your doctor: 1) Precisely what type of cancer do I have? 2) Has the cancer

spread beyond the primary site? Is so, where? 3) What tests did you use to determine this diagnosis? 4) Is there any indication that a second pathology report (lab test) is needed? 5) Are you recommending additional tests? What are you looking for with each test? 6) How certain are you that the tests and the resulting diagnosis are accurate? 7) What are my treatment options? Which one(s) do you recommend? (Record these recommendations in precise detail). 8) Will you obtain and review with me the treatment information on my type and stage of cancer from the National Cancer Institute's Physicians Data Query (PDQ) program? 9) Whom would you recommend for a second opinion? 10) Are you a board-certified oncologist? Record the answers in your journal.

3. *Choosing Holistic and Natural Healers:*

The goal is to analyze your diagnosis, be proactive and put in place the most effective integrated treatment program possible. Most cancer survivors develop "significant dietary changes" and eat with awareness. This is where holistic and natural healers can help them recover by raising their "nutritional IQ" while they develop a greater understanding of the nutrients contained in their food selections. They embrace foods that are less processed and feed themselves less for emotional and psychological reasons, concentrating instead on delivering premium nutrients to the body. There is a shift to a vegetarian approach of choice. A marked decrease in all meat, particularly red meat, is widely held to be beneficial.

4. *Put Your Medical Team in Place:*

Your medical team should consist of your doctor (cancer doctors are called "oncologist"), surgeon (if they operate), your medical technicians, nurses, other office staff, etc. Other people on your "wellness team" will be your spouse and other loved ones. The most important person on your wellness team is you! You are the one who is ill! It is you who must work to get well again. So you are in charge! Don't give the leadership to anyone else. If you are not assertive or even if you are assertive make sure you take someone to the doctor with you so they can help ask questions and help you understand any recommended treatments. He or she can be your "wellness advocate" which can be a family member or friend. Don't be intimidated by your doctors! Ask about medical terms you don't understand. Ask about reasons for tests. Ask about the results for those tests. Ask for success stories. Ask. Ask. Ask. Asking questions gives you significant power! You are the one in charge! Ask! Then record the responses. Come back to the responses again and again so you can understand the entire process. Are the team members working for you or working against you? If you feel like they are working against you then it might be time to make a substitution or heal yourself by using holistic or natural healers.

5. *Get a Second or Third Opinion:*

Obtain a "second or third opinion" from a board-certified oncologist, a cancer specialist. This is a critically important step that is not to be overlooked. If at all possible, the

second or even third opinion should be completed prior to starting any treatment program. The second opinion should come from an independent oncologist who is not in a working partnership, formal or informal, with the doctor who made the initial diagnosis. If possible, the second opinion should be given by an oncologist who is in a different medical group from the first. Second opinion consultations are that important that many people travel to major cancer centers to obtain them. Second opinions are standard procedures which “will not” alienate your doctor. Ask the doctor or staff for a complete transcript of your medical records. Then take the records with you or have them sent ahead to the second opinion or third opinion doctors. The cost should be reimbursed by all insurance programs. Even if you are not covered, get a second or even a third opinion!

6. **Understand Your Treatments:**

Conventional treatments include:

- **Surgery:** Removal of the tumor by operating on it. Surgery is the most frequent employed cancer treatment. It is best used when the cancer is small and has not moved to other parts of the body. While surgery is the most common form of conventional treatment, dozens of types of cancer diagnosis do not indicate surgery. Many patients panic when they are told their cancer is “inoperable.” Inoperable does not equate with incurable!
- **Radiation:** Exposure to x-rays or radium. Radiation therapy is employed in approximately one-half of all cancer cases. It is often used in combination with other treatment options, for example, either before or after surgery.
- **Chemotherapy:** The use of cytotoxic (a substance that has a toxic effect on certain cells) chemicals. Chemotherapy is most often used when the cancer has spread or when the diagnosis is a systemic-type cancer. It is often used in combination with radiation therapy and surgery to control tumor growth. Chemotherapy may be in a pill form, and be taken by mouth, or it may be in liquid form and injected into a muscle or, most commonly, given through a vein. The drugs may be administered in a daily, weekly, or monthly program for periods ranging from a few months to a lifetime in a few cases. Side effects, once the fear of all patients are now being effectively controlled and vary widely from individual to individual.

Remember when you agree to have chemotherapy or radiation treatment; the process can actually put cancer into your body. These types of treatments break down all your cells (good and bad cells) and if your body is not strong enough to grow new cells then it might be hard to recover and this is why it is extremely important to start eating “antioxidants” and check out holistic and natural healers as soon as you are diagnosed with cancer. Some people are so weak or their immune system is so compromised that they cannot even handle the first treatment of radiation or chemotherapy.

7. **Three other types of conventional medical treatments are:**

- **Hormonal:** Employs or manipulates bodily hormones. Hormonal treatment is used in cancers that depend on hormones for their growth. Hormones are either removed, added, or their production is blocked through drugs or surgery that removes the hormone-producing gland.
- **Immunotherapy:** Enhancing the body's own immune function. Immunotherapies include the cytokines like the family of interleukins and interferons, and are an attempt to boost or restore the body's natural defense system.
- **Investigative:** Experimental programs. Investigative protocols are experimental. They are typically the last choice.

Cancer survivors have healthy "work ethics." They believe wellness is no accident, that it requires effort, and that it is their personal responsibility to make getting well the number one priority in their lives. They are active patients, involved with each decision and they must believe in their treatments. Excited belief will be key to a successful treatment program.

It takes two years to heal totally from cancer. Being cured from cancer does not mean that it will never return, especially if you go back to your old ways of living in an environment which allows cancer to breed. Being diagnosed with a recurrence of cancer, can be a frightening event, a time of re-evaluation medically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Through it all, there is good reason to be filled with hope provided you take an active part in the recovery process. A fighting spirit does make a difference. Remember no one is going to care about your situation more than you so you are going to have to save your ownself.

One of the best places to get second or third opinions or get more questions answered about cancer is at the National Cancer Institute's Center Information Service (CIS), Phone: (800) 4CANCER (422-6237, website: <http://www.cancernet.nci.nih.gov> or American Cancer Society, Phone: (800) 227-2345, website: <http://www.cancer.org>.

Also read these health articles "*The Top 12 Steps to Become Healthier Over the Next 30 Days*" <http://www.howtotakecontrol.com/series3.html> and because the immune system is so important to your recovery process read "*The Top 20 Steps to Boost Your Immune System and Get Back The Energy You Had Years Ago*" <http://www.howtotakecontrol.com/ImmuneSystem.html>. Other health articles on cancer are located at <http://www.howtotakecontrol.com/healtharticles.html> and books at <http://www.angelspress.com/recommendedbooks.html>.

My friends' deaths were not in vain. Little will they ever know, their deaths allowed me to raise my level of thinking and because a cancer educator. Now I am in a better position to educate others and help keep their legacies alive. They will be missed!

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