

## **Cancer: Take Control of Your Health**

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Have you lost a loved one to cancer? Have you had a cancer scare yourself? Are you struggling with cancer right now? At one time or another we've all dealt with someone who had cancer. Because of the potentially devastating results of cancer it is a most talked about and most misunderstood condition. Some say cancer is a disease, some refer to cancer as misguided cells or a cellular disorder, and some think it is a result of a poorly functioning immune response. The human body has billions of cells which are used to form tissues; those tissues are used to form organs, and organs form body systems. Each organ is composed of highly specialized cells and tissues designed to do a specific function.

For example, cells in the stomach are responsible for aiding the digestion of food. You would never find cardiac cells in the stomach or stomach cells in the kidney. The cells within your body work very hard; they are individual powerhouses generating their own energy and performing their own functions.

Although modern science is just starting to truly understand how cancer is formed within the body, we also know that there is a high susceptibility to cancer from environmental triggers. Once the cancer cells mutate and thrive, they overwhelm the now-weakened immune response and spread. Researchers have identified a Type C personality, which refers to a personality type more susceptible to cancer. The Type C personality is a consumer of a diet high in sugar, high in saturated/trans-fats, and high in processed and refined foods. Type C people are overweight, overworked, and overstressed. They tend to suppress their emotions, put everyone else's feelings before their own, and quietly stew about it. Frankly, it doesn't take a brain surgeon to figure out that anyone who lives the lifestyle of a Type C personality is going to be prone to not only cancer but also a whole host of conditions and potentially life-threatening diseases.

Researchers have also found a significant genetic predisposition to cancer, and you can't run or hide from genes. Some say it all boils down to immunity. Some individuals are blessed with an immune system that surpasses the abilities of all the military branches of the United States. Then there are those who are like Third World countries—they are thankful to make it through another day without incident. Scientific advances in longevity studies have also led to discoveries of new forms of cancer. Unfortunately, the longer you live, the greater the opportunity for one of your billions of cells to mutate and become cancerous. In addition to the Type C personality, other cancer profiles have been developed. Here is one that sounds like it should be part of a commercial for a metabolic aid: If you are fat, fair (referring to your complexion), and forty, you are at risk for gallbladder cancer. If you are fair, a redhead, and freckled, you are at risk for skin cancer.

Okay, so I am in trouble, because I am fair, redheaded, freckled, over forty, and I'm slightly overweight. Well, I am not a natural redhead, and I only gained a little weight after menopause. But should I be worried? How do you combat a profile? Perhaps that is why I don't like profiles. I would much prefer to think that I have some control of my environment. And if you give in to profiling, you might as well give in to hopelessness and despair.

Individuals who tend to get sick are the ones who make themselves sick by obsessive worrying. Ruth was a friend of the family while I was growing up. From the moment I could understand what she was saying until today (she is eighty-five and still kicking), she was petrified of getting cancer. She has lived to see loved ones get cancer, but she herself has never had it. She has made herself sick worrying about it. You can't stop what is already in place; the simple fact of the matter is you are a human being with human frailties.

We don't live forever; as we age our immune system becomes less responsive, producing fewer of the fighting powerhouses of specialized killing cells. I am not saying to just sit back and let whatever is going to happen, happen. What I am trying to say is that you should enjoy your life. No one really knows how long we have on this planet. You could be the model of perfect health and die tomorrow in a car accident. Wouldn't it be better to die knowing that you have done all that you wanted, seen all that you wanted, loved, and were loved?

I recommend that everyone start a wish list. A wish list is comprised of short- and long-term goals and desires. The items on the list are things you want to achieve, do, or accomplish before you die. The list can be modified with additions and deletions. You set a goal of achieving as many wish list items as you can during your lifetime. Each time you accomplish something on your list, check it off. It is a fulfilling and, frankly, a fun endeavor, but more importantly it will help prevent you from experiencing regret when you are older. One of the worst scenes that I encountered as a nurse was a hospice patient who had regrets of things he never did, people he never saw, and things he never said. When your dying time comes, don't be one of the ones whose focus is on regrets and missed opportunities. When it is time to go, die in peace and tranquility.

Excerpted from the book *Take Control: A Guide to Holistic Living* by Dr. Linda Mundorff, iUniverse publishing [www.iuniverse.com](http://www.iuniverse.com)

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*Passionate about self-advocacy and health reform, she is currently in her second year of law studies. She is an outstanding speaker and has aroused audiences on topics such as: The mindless patient; Dying to know your patient rights; Alternative and modern medicine: What you need to know to survive!*

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