

FINDING YOUR WAY

AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO YOUR
CANCER CARE

YES TO LIFE



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

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FOREWORD

In May 2023 I was diagnosed with cancer, aged 40. No matter what your age, nothing can prepare you for hearing those words.

What quickly follows is having to get your head around a barrage of information regarding your cancer and treatment, whilst also having to deal with the emotions and practicalities that come with a diagnosis like this.

I get it. I've been there and I share and can relate to your pain.

Not long after I was diagnosed, I began to feel utterly powerless in relation to what was happening inside my body whilst waiting for various treatments to start. I couldn't bear the thought of anything I was (unknowingly) doing, feeding the tumour that was growing inside me. I started to wonder whether there was anything I could do to help myself in the now, and until my treatment started. Was there anything I could change to give me back some control? Or was I simply in the hands of a medical team making decisions on my behalf?

That first internet search sparked a journey for me that literally changed my life, my overall health, wellbeing and my treatment plan. I spent hours upon hours (and still do) researching, learning, reading, listening. The further I went down this rabbit hole, the more a world of self-help, complementary medicine and owning your own treatment in the fight against cancer opened up to me. So in answer to those questions I initially asked myself, it turns out there's a whole lot you can do!

The inspiration for this booklet was borne from the frustration that I felt in trying to find out how to help myself. This information should be available to everyone who's diagnosed with cancer, without having to invest precious time and energy. So with the help of Yes to Life, this booklet was created to start you on a journey of self-help and discovery, should you wish to go down this path.

Regardless of your cancer type, this booklet will arm you with information and resources to help you make small or big changes to your life, your lifestyle, and to build a team that supports the way you want your treatment plan to progress. A lot of the lifestyle changes that you can make, have, through scientific studies, been shown to help in the fight against cancer, and will help to improve your general health and wellbeing.

I truly and whole-heartedly hope that this booklet gives you the power to own your journey, and the inspiration and courage to live a healthier and more fulfilled life after diagnosis, regardless of your prognosis.

Statistics are statistics, not fate. Do something for yourself and take back some control; empower yourself as you travel through one of the toughest journeys life has to throw at you. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Do some of it, do all of it; whatever you choose to do, do it for yourself and do what feels right. Find your way.

How a holistic and integrative approach can help

No two people are the same, and no two people deal with a cancer diagnosis in the same way. There is no right or wrong way, there is only your way, and this was mine.

Looking back I'd say that before my diagnosis, I was suffering from chronic stress and anxiety. I was run down. I drank too much. I ate badly (even though I didn't think I ate too badly at the time). I never had enough time. I worked too hard. I was lucky if I slept for 4 hours each night, despite my best intentions. I exercised but didn't really look after myself. I'd not dealt with past trauma. All of these things are shown to increase the risk of getting cancer, and I was dealing (or not dealing) with a lot of them. It hardly seems surprising to me now that it happened.

All of the topics within this booklet I integrated into my life during treatment in some way, shape or form,. I continue to integrate them into my life now that I'm through treatment, purely because I feel better for it.

With the support of friends and family, I found my voice and worked with my oncology team to make sure that the treatment I had was the right choice for me. I'm certain that making the choices and changes that I did helped me to get through my treatment.

I'm no longer stressed or anxious. I'm now a healthier weight. I made many dietary changes which include avoiding Ultra Processed Foods (UPF's) and eating a mainly plant-based, whole-food diet (I regularly have my bloods checked to make sure I'm not lacking in any essential vitamins or minerals).

Being in the kitchen used to be a chore, but now I love spending time experimenting with new foods and flavours. I'm now teetotal and love waking up without that fuzzy feeling. When I drink water, I try to drink filtered hydrogen water as amongst other benefits, studies have found that hydrogen water can help reduce the side effects of some cancer treatments.

With the help of my oncologist I added various supplements to my diet. I sleep like a baby most nights (but only the kind of baby that sleeps for at least 8 hours). As you read on, you'll find out that we're exposed to lots of toxins every day, so I now use an app that helps me to make the right choices when it comes to home, cosmetic and other health and beauty products. I made changes at work. I dealt with past trauma and had counselling to help me with the cancer diagnosis. I exercise and meditate daily. I'm also having fun learning new skills such as reiki and yoga, and feel confident my new-found love of health and wellbeing won't stop here.

I'm no angel. I don't stay 100% on track, but I also don't beat myself up for moments of indulgence. Life is for living, and being diagnosed with cancer makes you realise only too well it can be short, so I strike a balance that works for me.

The benefits of making such changes can also stretch beyond just you to your family. If they see you consciously making healthy choices, perhaps it will inspire them to make better choices for themselves.

It took a diagnosis like this for me to start looking after myself, but I don't see it as being too late, as I'll reap the benefits now and in the future. If you make these changes now, you can influence your future. And whilst I can't prove it and will never really know whether it's bought me extra time here on this earth, I can say with certainty that it's improved HOW I spend my time on this earth.

If you can help influence your family to start making better choices now, just know that everything in this booklet helps contribute to lowering the risk not only of developing cancer, but also all other chronic diseases.

I hope that you're able to take something away from the information contained within this booklet and wish you well in finding your way, just as I found mine.

Melanie U.

INTRODUCTION

A diagnosis of cancer can be a seismic event, shaking the very foundation of one's life and instilling a profound sense of uncertainty and fear. In the face of such adversity, information can be a powerful instrument for our wellbeing.

Cancer is fundamentally a disease characterised by the uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells. These cells have the potential to invade or spread to other parts of the body, disrupting normal physiological functions. Cancer is not a single disease but a collection of related diseases, each with its unique characteristics and behaviours.

Cancer can arise from a complex interplay of genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors. While some risk factors such as genetics and age are beyond our control, others can be managed.

This booklet is a summary of 'The Cancer Revolution', a book that includes heaps of useful and helpful information if you have cancer or if you are a carer or family member who wants to know more about options. It is a guide to integrating complementary and conventional medicine and has been written by Patricia Peat of Cancer Options together with 37 other contributors. Split into 8 sections it covers nutrition, lifestyle, restoration of health, dealing with toxins, dealing with your medical team, getting the most from testing and useful resources and referencing. With lots of tips, myth busters and pointers to great information, the book is a great tool. For more information go to: thecancerrevolution.co.uk.

Some key contributing factors can include:

Genetic Predisposition: Certain genetic mutations can increase the likelihood of developing cancer. Please note that these only account for a small percentage of cases.

Environmental Factors: Exposure to carcinogens, such as tobacco smoke, radiation, and certain chemicals, can damage DNA and trigger cancerous changes.

Lifestyle Choices: Diet, physical activity, and exposure to toxins play significant roles. Poor nutrition, lack of exercise, and exposure to harmful substances can compromise the body's ability to prevent and fight cancer.

Chronic Inflammation: Persistent inflammation in the body can create an environment conducive to cancer development. Conditions causing chronic inflammation, such as obesity and certain infections, are notable risk factors.

Immune System Function: A weakened immune system can fail to detect and destroy abnormal cells, allowing them to proliferate unchecked.

Integrative Approach to Cancer Care

An integrative approach to cancer care, combining conventional treatments with a holistic perspective, aims to enhance the body's natural defences and improve overall well-being. Key elements of this approach can include:

Nutrition: Emphasising a diet rich in anti-inflammatory and nutrient-dense foods.

Detoxification: Reducing the body's toxic burden through various means.

Stress Management: Incorporating techniques to manage stress, which can impact immune function.

Physical Activity: Encouraging regular exercise to support overall health.

WHAT IS INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE?

Integrative Medicine is the judicious combining of conventional treatments such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy and surgery, with lifestyle and complementary therapies, to broaden patient choice, increase patient engagement, improve quality of life and extend survival.

It's a 'best of both worlds' scenario that has its roots in the patient perspective. Historically, it's been an 'either/or' situation between conventional medicine and other approaches, which has often placed patients in an extremely difficult position at one of the most stressful points in their lives.

Any open-minded patient looking for the best possible outcome is far less interested in the label attached to an approach, than in whether or not it could help them. This is the perspective that underpins Integrative Medicine.

There are enormous strengths to both conventional and lifestyle/complementary approaches. Conventional medicine is largely preoccupied with removing or killing cancer cells and has some highly effective means of doing this. This approach can often be life-saving, such as when dealing with a rapidly growing cancer or one that threatens a vital organ; and early surgery can commonly be sufficient to deliver a complete remission.

Lifestyle practitioners, however, are far more preoccupied with the process of cancer – what circumstances prompted it to start, what is driving it – and overarchingly they are concerned with optimising the health and immunity of the patient. Their approach can result in a slowing or reversing of the process, which can deliver unexpectedly good outcomes in even late stage cancers.

With the proportion of cancers attributed to lifestyle ranging from 60% to well over 90%, depending on who you ask, there is no credible rationale for overlooking lifestyle approaches.

Clearly, conventional medicine has a certain level of success independently – although in the case of many of the most prevalent cancers, the statistics are still shockingly poor, notably in the UK where performance is well below average for its investment. The magic happens when the full gamut of both approaches is available.

WHAT CAN INTEGRATION ACHIEVE?

If we take conventional treatment as the ‘baseline’, what can lifestyle and complementary medicine add?

Before Treatment

Using specific nutritional interventions, it is possible to prepare a patient for treatment so as to minimise subsequent damage to organs from chemotherapy, trauma from surgery, or collateral damage from radiation. And the use of immune modulating compounds can provide a buffer against the immuno-suppressive effects of chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

During Treatment

There are many strategies for minimising the specific side-effects and ongoing collateral damage caused by conventional treatments, as well as for increasing overall resilience, enabling patients to go through treatment feeling better, and spending less time in hospital suffering from side effects and infections that result from lowered immunity.

The range of techniques for improving the effectiveness of conventional treatments is expanding rapidly. Alongside established techniques such as the use of heat (hyperthermia) or oxygen (hyperbaric oxygen therapy), evidence for the remarkable synergy of some natural compounds with conventional approaches is demonstrating significant gains in survival.

Following Treatment

This is probably the period when integration can deliver the most. Conventional medicine has few strategies beyond some hormone suppressing drugs or, more recently, targeted drugs such as herceptin, to keep patients from relapsing. The lifestyle practitioner's focus on discovering and remedying the causes addresses the enormous risk that, without such understanding and intervention, a patient is wide open to relapsing shortly after a 'successful' treatment for exactly the same reasons they were first diagnosed – which is tragically all too common. And the parallel preoccupation with the optimisation of the body's innate defences is key to creating the conditions for a stable remission.

There are a huge range of safe, inexpensive resources available right now to help people with cancer achieve better outcomes and quality of life.

10 VITAL FACTS FOR YOU TO KNOW AND COMMIT TO MEMORY

1. Cancer is a two-way process; it can grow but it can also shrink or go into remission
2. People have recovered from every single kind of cancer and are living to tell the tale
3. A healthy body has detection and repair mechanisms for cancer cells; the integrative healthcare approach works to repair and boost these natural anti-cancer mechanisms within the body
4. Apart from conventional medicine, there are many factors over which you have primary control and that can positively affect your health and wellbeing
5. Your personal response to your cancer can make a huge difference to both your quality of life and survival
6. You are a unique individual; average medical statistics cannot be applied to individuals
7. Your conventional treatment is only one component of your approach to fighting cancer
8. You do not have to rely entirely on the effectiveness of medical treatment alone to 'cure' you of cancer; give up the passive patient role and join forces with your doctors, getting as proactive as possible in recovering your health
9. It is you, not your medical team, who is in overall charge of your situation; your doctors are there to serve you and it is your wishes, not theirs, that really matter
10. Astonishingly, many people who have embarked on the self-healing approach to cancer have ended up saying that they are actually grateful for their illness because they have come to feel much happier, healthier and more alive than ever before

Keep re-reading these facts until the message sinks in. Copy them onto a card or phone to carry with you at all times.

You can then read them again whenever you feel the need.

DEVELOPING A PERSONALISED INTEGRATIVE PLAN

Recognising that no two cancers are identical, integrative oncology personalises plans. This customisation should consider the type of cancer, its stage, the patient's overall health, and personal preferences. This is just a summary that will be further developed in the chapters ahead.

Creating an effective integrative oncology team and plan must involve assembling a diverse group of healthcare professionals who can address various aspects of cancer care. Key members of your team can include:

Oncologists: Lead the medical treatment, including chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery.

Integrative Medicine Specialists: Provide expertise in complementary therapies and how they can be safely integrated with conventional treatments.

Nutritional Therapists: Offer nutritional advice to support overall health and manage treatment side effects.

Physical Therapists: Help maintain physical strength and mobility, essential for recovery and quality of life.

Mental Health Professionals: Address emotional and psychological needs, offering counselling, stress management, and support groups.

Patient Navigators: Assist patients in coordinating care, understanding treatment options, and accessing resources.

A Holistic Healing Plan

A holistic healing plan encompasses a comprehensive strategy that integrates various dimensions of health, including physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being.

The process of creating a holistic healing plan begins with self-awareness and self-reflection. It involves taking an honest inventory of one's current state of health and identifying areas that may need attention or improvement. This may include assessing physical symptoms, emotional challenges, mental stressors, and spiritual needs. By gaining clarity regarding our unique strengths, weaknesses, and goals, we can tailor a healing plan to resonate with our individual needs and aspirations.

Creating this plan is a deeply personal and empowering process. It involves listening to the wisdom of our bodies, minds, and spirits, and making choices that support our overall wellbeing..

Components of a Personalised Holistic Plan

Physical Health

Physical health forms the foundation of overall well-being and includes aspects such as nutrition, exercise, sleep, and preventive healthcare.

Regular exercise, such as walking, jogging, yoga, or strength training, to improve cardiovascular health, strength, and flexibility.

Balanced nutrition, focusing on whole, nutrient-dense foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats.

Prioritising adequate sleep, aiming for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night to support physical and mental health.

Mental and Emotional Well-being

Mental and emotional well-being involves managing stress, cultivating resilience, and nurturing positive emotions.

Mindfulness and relaxation practices, such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, or progressive muscle relaxation, to reduce stress and promote relaxation.

Seeking support from mental health professionals or support groups when needed, to address issues such as anxiety, depression, or trauma.

Engaging in activities that promote joy, creativity, and personal growth, such as hobbies, artistic pursuits, or volunteering.

Practicing self-compassion and acceptance, acknowledging and validating one's own feelings and experiences without judgment.

Social Connections and Relationships

Social connections and relationships are vital for emotional support, belonging, and our overall well-being.

Prioritising quality time with loved ones, such as family members, friends, or partners, through regular gatherings, phone calls, or shared activities.

Participating in social activities and community events that foster a sense of belonging and connection with others.

Setting boundaries and prioritising relationships that are supportive, nurturing, and aligned with one's values and goals.

NUTRITION

Nutrition plays a critical role in cancer prevention and treatment. A well-balanced diet can support the body's immune system, help manage treatment side effects, and improve overall well-being. Incorporating a variety of nutrient-dense foods into one's diet is especially important for those fighting cancer.

Optimum Nutrition for Support Through Cancer

Most of us are aware that good health begins with good food, but it can often be difficult to know exactly what the most crucial changes are. Conflicting messages in the media can be confusing and our hectic lifestyles may mean we reach for foods that are not always the best choice. These general dietary guidelines may provide support during cancer and help to get you back on track to optimal health.

Foods to Increase

Organic Foods

Organic foods have had less exposure to pesticides, fertilisers, preservatives and hormones. This reduces your intake of these harmful chemicals. Organic produce is likely to have a higher level of nutrients than intensely farmed non-organic produce. If cost is an issue, you can prioritise which foods to buy organic – any animal products should ideally be organic, or wild caught (e.g. fish).

Anti-oxidant Rich Fruits and Vegetables

Fruit and vegetables are rich sources of several compounds that are anti-oxidants. Anti-oxidants are natural compounds that work together to boost detoxification, improve immune function, reduce inflammation, improve cellular structure, and protect against toxins. Aim to choose a variety of bright, colourful fruit (especially berries eg blueberries, blackberries) and vegetables (but more vegetables than fruit).

Include mushrooms such as maitake, reishi and shiitake, as they contain molecules that may help boost the immune system. Juicing can often be a good way of increasing anti-oxidants. Juices are best prepared at home and consumed within 15 minutes to obtain the maximum benefit. There are lots of different types of juicers on the market and sometimes it is a bit difficult to decide which one is best for you. Masticating juicers do not create unwanted heat when operating but can often be slower and more difficult to use. For the best advice on juicers, take a look at the chapter in *The Cancer Revolution* by Jason Vale.

Fibre

Food sources such as vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds, wholegrains, beans and pulses are rich in fibre. It has been shown to feed the beneficial bacteria in the intestines thus helping to prevent constipation and the build-up of toxins.

N.B. If you have cancer of the digestive tract and have been given an ileostomy or colostomy you will be unable to follow a high fibre diet. It is also essential to have a good water intake if you follow a high fibre diet.

Water

It is important to maintain a good water intake. Aim to drink at least 1½ to 2 litres a day. This is roughly equivalent to 8 large glasses a day. Tap water can contain chemicals and hormonal residues and so it is best to use a water filter. A reverse osmosis filter is preferable, but if this is not possible then use a filter jug or bottled water. If bottled water is used, it is best from glass, not plastic bottles. This is because plastic bottles may leach xeno-oestrogens (false oestrogens that can mimic our own hormones in the body) into the water.

Healthy Fats

The omega 3 oils found in walnuts, flax seeds and oily fish such as salmon, tuna, herring, mackerel, trout and sardines have good anti-inflammatory actions, and so may support the immune system. Aim to eat 3 portions of oily fish a week and snack on nuts and seeds (ground flax seed may be particularly beneficial, especially in hormone-sensitive cancers). An omega 3 supplement may also be of benefit.

Foods to Reduce

Sugar

Tumour cells have been shown to feed off simple carbohydrates – sugars – and so it is vital to reduce your intake of sugars and sugary foods. It has also been shown that a high intake of sugar can suppress white blood cells by up to 50% for up to five hours after consumption. Avoid white 'refined' foods, such as white breads, pasta and rice, and choose wholegrain alternatives. Beware of processed foods, as these are often laden with sugars and sweeteners. Keep chocolate and confectionary intake to a minimum. If you do indulge, go for the darkest organic chocolate with the highest cocoa content and low or no sugar. Better still, try 'raw' which is a natural superfood.

Coffee and Tea

Coffee and tea stimulate the adrenal glands releasing sugar into the system. They also have a dehydrating effect and if taken after a meal can decrease the absorption of nutrients. Keep tea and coffee to 1-2 cups a day. Try caffeine free alternatives. Green tea has been shown to have an anti-cancer action when drunk in moderation.

Foods to Avoid

Pre-Packaged and Ready Made Food

The quick and easy ready-made foods found in most supermarkets should be avoided. They have been over processed and are therefore low in most nutrients. Additionally, they are often laden with sugar, salt, saturated fats, additives, flavourings and preservatives.

Trans Fats and Hydrogenated Fats

Trans fats and hydrogenated fats are found in margarines, spreads and refined products such as biscuits and other packaged foods. The body will use these fats in the absence of the more healthy essential fats. This may promote weakness in the cell structure and progression of cancer. These fats also tend to interfere with the more positive anti-inflammatory actions of the healthy essential fats found in nuts and seeds.

Artificial Sweeteners

Artificial sweeteners are in many products on supermarket shelves. One of the main artificial sweeteners is a substance called Aspartame. These artificial chemicals may play a role in immune disruption and are best left out of your diet.

Alcohol

Alcohol has many effects within the body. It has been shown to deplete the body of B vitamins, reduce immune functioning and increase the workload of the liver. Alcohol is also very high in sugar. If you find it difficult to give up alcohol completely, cut your intake down and try to change to organic sources of wine. A good choice for a limited intake of alcohol is red wine (Pinot Noir particularly) which contains a high level of resveratrol, a natural salvestrol with anticancer properties. Ideally have no more than one glass of wine a day, with a meal (for some types of cancers even small amounts of alcohol are best avoided).

Salt

High salt foods should be avoided. This includes ready meals, soy sauce, miso, anchovies, salted peanuts, crisps and any heavily salted meals. Do not add salt to your cooking and meals; use different seasonings and herbs instead. If you do use salt, choose Celtic or Himalayan salt, which have a broader spectrum of minerals, and use very little.

Fizzy Drinks

Carbonated soft drinks are loaded either with sugar or artificial sweeteners. The phosphoric acid used to maintain the 'fizz' has been shown to increase losses of certain minerals. The artificial colourants and flavours also place a load on the body's elimination systems. Choose fresh juices diluted with water or chilled water with a slice of lemon or lime instead. You can make your own fruit-flavoured water by adding freshly cut fruit to a jug of filtered water.

These recommendations are a general guideline of supportive dietary alterations. In some cases there may be more specific recommendations for each individual that may be of benefit. Please ask for more information on how to obtain specific advice.

Important note: *It is always advisable to consult a trained nutritional practitioner before embarking on any programme of supplements. Self-prescribing can lead to nutritional imbalances that can be harmful rather than helpful.*

The Top 10 Cancer-Fighting Foods

Broccoli: Contains sulforaphane, which has been shown to inhibit cancer cell growth.

Berries: Rich in antioxidants, particularly anthocyanins, that protect cells from damage.

Tomatoes: High in lycopene, which has anti-cancer properties, especially for prostate cancer.

Garlic: Contains allicin, which boosts the immune system and has anti-cancer effects.

Turmeric: Its active ingredient, curcumin, has powerful anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer properties.

Green Tea: Rich in catechins, which can inhibit the growth of cancer cells.

Leafy Greens: Such as spinach and kale, packed with vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients that support overall health.

Nuts and Seeds: High in healthy fats, fibre, and antioxidants that promote heart health and reduce inflammation.

Citrus Fruits: Contain vitamin C and flavonoids, which have been shown to protect against cancer.

Whole Grains: Rich in fibre and essential nutrients that help maintain a healthy digestive system and lower the risk of colorectal cancer.

LIFESTYLE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THOSE WITH CANCER

There are several ways in which lifestyle may affect progression through cancer. A positive mental attitude has been shown to have a significant effect on how we cope with the situation and in some cases has shown to be associated with a better outcome and quality of life. It can often be difficult to maintain a positive outlook during cancer (as opposed to maintaining a 'brave face') and it is usually essential to have some help and support. This may be provided in many ways – through friends, colleagues, and support groups, or through a counsellor or other practitioner. Do not be afraid to ask for help – its importance cannot be overestimated.

Stress may play a significant role in the development of cancer and inevitably, a diagnosis of cancer brings considerable additional stress. Stress reduction may result in improved immune system function and a more positive outlook. Each person has their own way of dealing with stress and there are several approaches that are beneficial. Time management and knowing your limits are often forgotten, but vitally important. Other ways to reduce stress include massage, aromatherapy, meditation and moderate exercise. Aim to take part in activities such as tai chi, swimming, or yoga at least 2-3 times a week and try to take at least a short walk every day.

Physical activity of at least 20-30 minutes/day is very beneficial.

Stop smoking and avoid inhaling second hand smoke. Help to quit smoking can be found through your GP or pharmacy staff.

Prioritising Sleep for Optimal Health

We often overlook the crucial aspect of good and healthy sleep. Sleep play a vital role in regulating various physiological processes, including immune function, hormone regulation, metabolism, and cell repair.

The Importance of Prioritising Sleep:

Research has established a clear link between inadequate sleep and an increased risk of cancer. Chronic sleep disturbances, such as short sleep duration, poor sleep quality, and irregular sleep patterns, have been associated with an elevated risk of various cancer types.

Sleep deprivation can disrupt the body's natural circadian rhythm, leading to alterations in hormone levels, immune function, and cellular repair mechanisms, all of which play critical roles in cancer development and progression.

Overall, by prioritising adequate and restorative sleep, you can support your body's natural defences.

Tips for Prioritising Sleep:

Establish a Consistent Sleep Schedule: Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends, to regulate your body's internal clock and promote better sleep quality.

Create a Relaxing Bedtime Routine: Engage in calming activities before bedtime, such as reading, taking a warm bath, or practising relaxation techniques like deep breathing or meditation, to signal to your body that it's time to wind down.

Create a Sleep-Friendly Environment: Make your bedroom conducive to sleep by keeping it dark, quiet, and cool. Invest in a comfortable mattress and pillows to optimise comfort and support.

Limit Exposure to Screens Before Bed: Minimise exposure to electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, and computers before bedtime, as the blue light emitted can disrupt melatonin production and interfere with sleep.

Avoid Stimulants and Heavy Meals Before Bed: Limit consumption of caffeine, alcohol, and heavy or spicy foods close to bedtime, as they can interfere with sleep onset and quality.

The Importance of Exercise and Physical Activity

Exercise and physical activity stand out as powerful tools for cancer prevention and during treatment, with lifestyle factors playing a significant role in reducing risk and promoting overall well-being.

Practical Tips for Incorporating Exercise into Daily Life:

Embracing an active lifestyle doesn't require elaborate gym facilities or complex workout routines. Simple yet effective strategies can help you incorporate exercise and physical activity into your day.

Start small: Begin with manageable activities such as walking, cycling, swimming, or gardening, and gradually increase intensity and duration over time.

Find activities you enjoy: Choose activities that bring you joy and fulfilment, whether it's dancing, hiking, playing sports, or practising yoga.

Set realistic goals: Set achievable goals based on your fitness level, current health, day schedule, and preferences, and celebrate your progress along the way.

Make it social: Exercise with friends, family, or community members to stay motivated and accountable, and enjoy the social benefits of physical activity.

Prioritise consistency: Aim for regular, consistent activity, even if it means breaking it up into shorter bouts throughout the day.

Examples of different types of exercises and physical activities:

Aerobic Exercise: Walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, dancing, aerobics classes.

Benefits:

- Improves cardiovascular health by strengthening the heart and lungs.

- Helps maintain a healthy weight and reduce body fat, lowering the risk of obesity-related cancers.
- Boosts mood and reduces stress and anxiety, promoting overall mental well-being.
- Enhances circulation, delivering oxygen and nutrients to cells throughout the body.

Flexibility and Stretching: Yoga, Pilates, stretching exercises.

Benefits:

- Improves flexibility and range of motion, reducing the risk of injury during physical activity.
- Relieves muscle tension and stiffness, promoting relaxation and stress reduction.
- Enhances posture and body alignment, reducing strain on muscles and joints.
- Increases blood flow to muscles and tissues, aiding in recovery and reducing soreness.
- Promotes mindfulness and mental relaxation, fostering a sense of calm and well-being.

Balance and Coordination Exercises: Tai chi, qigong, balance exercises (e.g., standing on one leg, heel-to-toe walking).

Benefits:

- Improves balance and stability, reducing the risk of falls and injuries, especially in older people.
- Enhances coordination and motor skills, supporting overall physical function and mobility.
- Strengthens core muscles, which are essential for maintaining proper posture and stability.
- Promotes mindfulness and body awareness, fostering a sense of groundedness and presence.
- May help improve cognitive function and reduce the risk of age-related decline.

Additionally, consulting with a healthcare professional or certified trainer can help tailor an exercise program to your individual needs and goals.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Unfortunately we are exposed to an ever-increasing list of potential cancer-causing agents. These carcinogens are found in the air we breathe, the food we eat and the water we drink. They are found primarily in agricultural pesticides and sprays, industrial chemicals and city pollution. It is important to take a serious look at what you use:

- To cook (avoid any coated pans and use instead ceramic, glass, cast iron or stainless steel)
- To clean your home (use white vinegar, bicarbonate of soda, or natural cleaning products)
- To clean your teeth and on your skin (use natural and organic products, free of parabens and phthalates, and natural deodorants without aluminium)
- In your garden (if necessary, use pesticides made from essential oils or boric acid)

Excessive exposure to the sun, sunlamps and X-rays also have a negative effect upon the body and it is important to avoid these, if possible. Sunshine is beneficial, exposure to sunlight being the primary way in which we produce vital vitamin D, deficiencies of which have been linked to cancer incidence. However, overexposure to full sunshine creates damage that can be the precursor of skin cancers. This risk is greatest for those who are more prone to burning.

Xeno-oestrogens (oestrogens mimics) may be found in plastics, industrial chemicals and also in our water supply. These have been implicated in hormone-sensitive cancers.

Try to avoid plastic packaging (particularly of fatty foods), plastic bottles, cling wrap, and never heat foods wrapped in plastic.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR ONCOLOGIST

Below are some of the most useful questions to have answers to, as suggested by experienced patients and practitioners. There are probably too many to get satisfactory answers to in one appointment, so it may be necessary to ask some by email or across more than one consultation.

It is important to write down answers, particularly any complex medical terms, so strongly consider taking a friend with you to do this (and for support) and/or even recording the appointment, if your oncologist agrees.

- What type of cancer do I have?
- Is my cancer growing fast or slowly?
- What are your treatment recommendations?
- Why have you chosen this treatment? How do you know that it is the best one for me?
- Are there any other known treatments for my cancer, in the UK or abroad, that are not available on the NHS, which I could possibly obtain privately? Have you considered these?
- Is the proposed treatment curative or palliative, i.e. will it get rid of the cancer enabling me to have a normal quality and length of life, or will it only extend my life by slowing the growth of the cancer or just improve my quality of life without lengthening it?
- What percentage of people see their cancer coming back after the proposed treatment? How soon does this tend to happen?
- How much time do you think I have to live if I go ahead with your recommended treatment?
- How much time do you think I have to live if I don't go ahead with your recommended treatment?
- What will my quality of life be like during and immediately after treatment? How disruptive and uncomfortable will the treatment be and what side-effects can I expect?
- What are the long-term side effects of the proposed treatment? Could they be life-threatening or leave me permanently disabled or impaired?

- Would you do this treatment if you had the same diagnosis as me?
- Are there any diet or lifestyle changes I can make that could improve my quality of life during treatment or make the treatment more effective?
- Can I talk to other patients who have had this treatment before deciding to go ahead?
- How soon do I need to make a decision as to whether or not to go ahead with the proposed treatment?
 - *If the answer to the above is sooner than you would like and doesn't leave you enough time to carefully consider your options: What would the consequences be of delaying my decision by x weeks?*

USEFUL RESOURCES

There are now many great books available which provide help and support. Some have been written as personal stories and others provide insight into cancer as a disease and into the integrative approach:

- **The Anatomy of Hope** – Jerome Groopman
- **Anticancer: A New Way of Life** – Dr David Servan-Schreiber
- **Cancer as a Turning Point** – Lawrence LeShan
- **Cancer in Context** – James Brennan & Clare Moynihan
- **Cancer is a Word, Not a Sentence** – Dr Robert Buckman
- **The Cancer Revolution** – Patricia Peat
- **The Cancer Whisperer** – Sophie Sabbage
- **Doctor You** – Jeremy Howick
- **The Emperor of All Maladies** – Siddhartha Mukherjee
- **Getting Well Again** – O Carl Simonton
- **How to Starve Cancer** – Jane McLelland
- **The Ketogenic Kitchen** – Domini Kemp & Patricia Daly
- **Lifeshocks** – Sophie Sabbage
- **Keep Healthy After Cancer** – Robert Thomas
- **The Metabolic Approach to Cancer** – Dr Nasha Winters & Jess Higgins Kelley
- **The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion** – Christopher K Germer
- **Radical Hope** – Kelly A Turner
- **Radical Remission** – Kelly A Turner
- **Say No to Cancer** – Patrick Holford

USEFUL WEBSITES

Yes to Life	yestolife.org.uk	The UK's Integrative Cancer Care Charity
Cancer Options	canceroptions.co.uk	Consultancy on Integrative Medicine options
The Cancer Revolution	thecancerrevolution.co.uk	Further information to complement this booklet

HEALTHY RECIPES

Trying to follow a healthy eating plan can seem impossible when you have cancer, and can be massively confusing. We have included some examples of healthy recipes here, but you can also follow the Food for Life series of recipes on YouTube. The recipes are easy to make, seasonal and yummy. You can find more information in the resources section.

Quinoa and Kale Salad

Ingredients:

1 cup quinoa
2 cups water
2 cups chopped kale
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
1/4 cup dried cranberries
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp lemon juice
Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

Rinse quinoa under cold water. Combine quinoa and water in a pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes, or until water is absorbed.

In a large bowl, combine cooked quinoa, kale, cherry tomatoes, walnuts, and cranberries.

In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Pour over quinoa mixture and toss to coat.

Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Berry Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 cup mixed berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)
- 1 banana
- 1 cup spinach
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 1 tsp honey (optional)

Instructions:

- Combine all ingredients in a blender.
- Blend until smooth.
- Pour into a glass and enjoy immediately.

Tropical Bircher Muesli

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 3 tbsp rolled oats (GF)
- ¼ cup sugar-free plant milk (cashew, almond, hazelnut, or oat)
- ½ mango
- 10-12 blueberries
- Cinnamon powder
- Chopped nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, etc.) and/or seeds (flax, chia, etc.)

Instructions:

- Soak 1 tbsp chia seeds and 3 tbsp rolled oats (GF) in a ¼ cup plant milk (cashew, almond, hazelnut, coconut or oat) for at least 20 minutes or up to overnight.

Top with ½ a ripe cubed mango and 10-12 blueberries. Sprinkle with cinnamon powder.

Add a tbsp of chopped nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, etc.) and/or seeds (flax, chia, etc.) for some protein and crunchiness.

Prepare a big portion and keep in the fridge for about 3 days; can also be enjoyed as a snack in the afternoon..

Pecan Bread

Ingredients:

- 300g pecans
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 4 eggs
- 1 large ripe banana
- 2 tbsp olive oil

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Grind the nuts in a blender. Place in a bowl with the other dry ingredients. Place the eggs, banana and oil in a blender.

Blitz till smooth. Pour the batter into the dry ingredients and mix well.

Spoon into a lined loaf pan and bake for 45 minutes. Turn out and allow to cool.

THE CANCER REVOLUTION

INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE
THE FUTURE OF CANCER CARE



YOUR GUIDE TO INTEGRATING COMPLEMENTARY AND CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE

The Cancer Revolution has been written to introduce the public to a revolutionary way of looking at cancer: Integrative Medicine. An alarmingly high and relentlessly growing number of people are being affected, either directly or indirectly, by this deadly disease. They do not have the luxury of waiting for science to come up with 'the cure'; they need answers right now.

The Cancer Revolution has answers. It is packed with strategies to improve your prospects and your quality of life. Integrative Medicine is the broadest possible approach to treatment, one that leaves no stone unturned. It is more comfortable with doing too much than with taking the risk of missing a vital piece of the puzzle. In this important new handbook, Patricia Peat has assembled a world-class team of experts to offer practical information on nutrition, lifestyle, conventional medicine and a range of cutting-edge treatments, as well as helpful guidance for navigating through cancer and beyond.

For the first time, The Cancer Revolution brings together, in the most accessible form, the whole spectrum of resources that are at hand to support you or someone you love through every stage of cancer and to help you to chart a healthy future.

The Cancer Revolution represents the fruition of a long-held dream to pull together the best information on the broadest range of approaches to cancer. We want this book to act as a catalyst for individuals to empower themselves, and to become part of a revolution that promises to change the experience of cancer treatment completely.

This revolution, Integrative Medicine, has the power to cut deeply into the devastating survival statistics and the desperately poor quality of life experienced by many following treatment for cancer. Even more importantly, it will help to promote a cultural revolution: the increasingly obvious sources of the ever-rising tide of cancer in the UK point clearly to where the solutions lie.

Find out more at <https://thecancerrevolution.co.uk/>

About Yes to Life:

We provide information to guide people with cancer through the confusing options for care. Our aim is to help them make informed decisions.

With our holistic approach, Yes to Life emphasises the importance of the mental, emotional and spiritual state of those with cancer. Along with physical needs, we feel these should be considered as central to any treatment programme.



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

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