



Beyond Survival to Victory:

DOCTOR'S VICTORY OVER CANCER
FUELS A PASSION FOR CORRECTING
AND PREVENTING CHRONIC DISEASE

Dr. Robert Zembroski rebuilt his body after harrowing cancer treatment. Now he's leading his patients and the public to the benefits of a therapeutic lifestyle, integrating nutrition, exercise, and stress management.

"You have a giant tumor in your chest," the radiologist said on August 18th, 2006. It was Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma.

My immediate response was not fear, but amazement. Quickly that shifted to anger, realizing that I had created this cancer by not taking care of myself—not eating well, not exercising the right way, not listening to my inner voice, and not dealing with the chaos and daily stress. Fortunately, that anger transformed into motivation

At 38 years old, I was not going down.

long-term relationship was imploding just as my expensive new home was being torn apart for major renovations. I literally had no refuge as stress piled upon stress.

Although I tried to work out my stress at the gym, it was a losing battle. Struggling to put out the fires in my life and business, I was eating poorly and sleeping little. I may also have unknowingly burdened my system with toxins from a new deodorant that triggered a bad reaction under one arm, in an area close to many lymph nodes.

Emergency Treatment

Working with a local oncologist, I immediately started 12 weeks of aggressive chemotherapy. I reclined for hours on end contemplating the irony of my situation as some of the world's most powerful chemicals ('red death' and a mustard gas-like chemical) were injected into my veins.

How did this cancer happen to me?

Science points to a variety of factors that cause normal cells to morph into cancer, but I know that a big factor in my case was several years of unrelenting — and unmanaged — stress.

Symptoms Appear

Stress takes time to do its damage.

Just as the smoke was clearing on my business and relationship problems, strange physical symptoms began to appear. For some time I had been losing weight and struggling with energy. I began waking during the night with my bed soaked in sweat. Normal activity, like bending over, created severe head pain and, to make matters worse, breathing became difficult. Upon waking one morning, my left pupil was twice the size of the right one, and there was noticeable swelling on the left side of my neck. Something was seriously wrong.

Worry and panic set in. I called a radiologist friend to inquire about what imaging study would be best. I ended up in his office getting a plain-view x-ray of my chest. As we viewed the result, he pointed to the film and said "You have a giant tumor in your chest." He mentioned several possibilities, but said he was sure it was lymphoma. He was right; behind my sternum sat a five-inch tumor. The cancer was non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and the tumor was growing like wildfire.

Now I had something concrete to fight.

As bad as my cancer symptoms were, they paled in comparison to cancer treatment. While the medical world knows how to kill cancer, it has no way to combat the destructive forces that chemo introduces into the bloodstream. You're probably

Stressful Backstory

From an outsider's perspective, I was on top of the world.

I loved my work. I had received new certification as a specialist in chiropractic neurology, and my practice was thriving. I was in high demand on the lecture circuit. Financial success allowed me to buy a new home.

However, my frantic pace, as well as a sense of invulnerability, caused me to miss or discount signs of trouble.

My perfect world came crashing down when I discovered that a trusted employee had been committing fraud, which created enormous legal, professional and financial worries. My



familiar with the gruesome side effects of chemo, and I had most of them.

Over 12 weeks of chemotherapy, I saw my body deteriorate daily. In addition to the usual side-effects of nausea and constipation, the veins in my arms collapsed and turned brown. I woke up with nosebleeds daily. I developed swelling in my left leg due to liver damage from the chemo. My eyes burned, and my fingertips tingled with nerve damage.

(Almost as troubling as the side-effects was seeing the “health facility” serve orange juice and cookies, processed sugars and refined flour that destroy the immune system. Definitely food for thought.)

Chemo and radiation seemed to have done the trick and killed the cancer. A PET scan revealed that the five-inch tumor had become a mass of scar tissue, except for “a little activity” in the center of the mass.

Gotta Go to Rehab

Understanding that food is information which can alter the body’s immune function, I proceeded to rehabilitate my system after chemotherapy with ultra-healthful nutrition.

I ate only organic meats, vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds — nothing artificial or processed. To get concentrated plant nutrients, I drank a cocktail of juices from leafy greens, celery, cucumber and apple. My supplement regimen included intravenous vitamin C twice a week, daily enzymes, anti-oxidants, omega 3 fatty acids, and vitamin D.

As I grew stronger I began weight training, working up to five days a week for 40 minutes. I added cardio slowly due to fatigue. Of course, many external stresses still existed. So I actively managed stress with meditation and yoga, as well as my exercise.

In my quest for the ultimate healthy body, I vowed to never, ever get sick again.

But Wait, There's More

I didn’t know it then, but I was getting into shape for my next round of toxic cancer treatment.

A follow-up PET scan showed increased activity in

the tumor, which is medical-speak that meant the cancer was growing again despite treatment. So I embarked on a second course of chemotherapy.

I had learned from my first experience that appropriate nutrition, exercise and sleep helped combat chemo fatigue. Nevertheless, the second round of chemo was devastating. In an effort to keep treating my patients, I carried a briefcase of chemotherapy drugs strapped to my back as the chemicals were fed to me through a port in my chest. At one point I was hospitalized while I received a platinum-based drug that crippled me with nausea.

Despite throwing everything in the chemo arsenal at the cancer, it would not die. Frustration and depression set in, and my prognosis looked grim.

When the next PET scan showed the cancer was still active, we started preparing for a stem-cell transplant; tests showed that one of my

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brothers was a good match. The plan was to siphon immature white blood cells from him and inject them into me. These immature cells would get into my bone marrow and begin to mature. Once grown, they would seek out and destroy the cancer cells that my immune system was unable to kill.

The preparation for the transplant involved more chemo to suppress my immune system. As I contemplated the upcoming procedure and its potential health risks, I realized that a stem-cell transplant would not work for me.

I developed a Plan B. I challenged the doctors to remove the tumor, a procedure they claimed never to have done before in cases like mine. But I persisted, so on August 18, 2008, my chest was opened and the entire tumor was removed. That operation saved my life.

I made it through the crisis care; I got through the trauma; the cancer was gone. They pulled the plugs and removed the needles. However, the cumulative effect of nearly two years of chemo, radiation and major surgery left me with new challenges. Yes, I was cancer-free, but I was also exhausted, weak and



debilitated. I asked myself, “Now what? How can I reverse the damage caused by the toxic effects of the treatments? How can I move beyond crisis care to fitness and health?” I studied the best research I could find. The facts were there; I had created my own disease.

Once I realized I had created my own disease, I set out to create my own recovery. The specialists in crisis care—the “ologists”—had each done his piece, but they had nothing to offer me in my quest to rebuild myself. They were not trained to handle “post-war” treatment. I did my own research to find ways to reverse the side effects of the chemotherapy (mustard gas and “red death”), radiation and major surgery.

I built my own program.

Although surgery removed the tumor, my body took time to recover from cancer treatment. Damage from chemo left me susceptible to ailments that my body would normally have shrugged off easily. For example, I developed kidney stones, a problem that had never bothered me before chemo. Post-poison, I had developed nerve and muscle weakness in my left lower leg that affected my ability to exercise.

Opportunistic infections can get a foothold in a chemo-weakened body. Sure enough, I contracted *Ehrlichiosis*, a tick-borne bacterial infection similar to Lyme disease. I also suffered from Candida infections of the skin due to my immuno-compromised state.

After chemotherapy, my blood tests revealed a number of abnormalities: low white blood cells, anemia, poor absorption of certain vitamins, and different hormone imbalances.

Through personal education, and digging through the muck of information and research, I created a protocol to rebuild myself. I have reversed these abnormalities with nutritional support, specific supplements, and plant-based compounds. In particular, I took in nutrients that reduce cellular inflammation and improve the energy production of my cells. I discovered well-known herbs that helped reverse the intolerable anemia.

Four months of chemo, then major surgery, left me feeling beaten up and tired. Metal clips and glue held my chest together as it healed. Permanent scars remain following the removal of the scar tissue and cancer.

You Can Defeat Your Disease

I developed a training program that consisted of high-intensity cardio and weights requiring only 20-40 minutes per session. I witnessed my body come back to life.

It is a well known fact that diet and exercise, along with the environment, can lead to circumstances that create disease. Most chronic disease does not come from genes, or appear out of thin air. In many cases, it can be traced back to specific aspects of diet, lack of exercise, toxicity, and/or emotional stress. In other words, we create our own diseases.

Renewing, Redefining My Mission

My training and personal health crisis, coupled with what I had seen my patients experience when trying to navigate the standard healthcare system—confusion, poor results or no results—caused me to take my practice to a new level. My own experience also caused me to look at patients differently, to listen more closely and be more attentive. I have a personal story: nine months of chemotherapy, radiation and major surgery—a life-changing

experience where I really faced death. What is the importance of my personal story? How did I get from that to where I am today?

The realization that no one was pulling the strings together, nobody was turning the Rubik's Cube to look at all sides, drove me to get additional training, to really discover and document what it is that people need to understand, so they don't make the bad lifestyle choices that lead to disease.

If you are looking for a doctor who will listen to you, help you to sort through the maze, and strive to create the outcome you want, I'm that doctor. Working with me in advance of a crisis may prevent a crisis. Last, if you've been through a crisis, I can help you rebuild. From my experience, I can give you the tools to conquer your condition and defeat your disease.

Dr. Robert Zembroski is a Chiropractic Physician, Board-Certified Chiropractic Neurologist, Clinical Nutritionist, and specialist in functional medicine. He is the director of the Darien Center for Functional Medicine in Darien, CT. For more information on Dr. Z, or his specialty practice, call 203-655-4494, or go online to www.drzembroski.com and www.darienfm.com.

GO BEYOND SURVIVAL, ADOPT THE CANCER VICTOR® LIFESTYLE

Nutrition Think of food and nutritional supplements as information that talks to your genes, telling them what to do. Poor nutrition can tell normal genes to create cancer! Cancer Victors follow a healthful food plan along with nutritional supplements tailored to healing the body of the debilitating side-effects of cancer treatment, and the prevention of cancer's return.

Toxic Elimination Many people unwittingly add a wide range of toxins to their bodies, creating conditions that promote cancer and other chronic diseases. Cancer Victors stop eating processed nutrient-deficient foods, and give up tobacco and alcohol. Eliminating environmental toxins such as pesticides, herbicides, household chemicals, BPA's found in plastics, allows the body to promote normal function.

Stress Management Chronic and unmanaged stress sets off toxic chemical reactions in the body, which can promote the formation of cancer. Cancer Victors use yoga, meditation, music, deep breath work, visualization and other techniques to reduce and manage stress. In addition to managing stress, eating whole foods and getting a good night's sleep will keep you strong in order to deal with the negative affects of the stress reaction in the body.

Physical Activity From gentle movement therapy to vigorous exercise, Cancer Victors thrive by incorporating physical movement into their daily routines. I recommend 20 minutes of cardio exercise daily and 3-4 days of resistance exercise to trigger beneficial chemical reactions throughout the body, increase lean muscle and eliminate unwanted body fat.

Proper Sleep Current research is uncovering the link between sleep and health, far beyond feeling tired. Unhealthful sleep habits, both under-sleeping and over-sleeping, may be symptoms of serious health problems. Poor sleep patterns can cause the body to malfunction, causing internal inflammation which contributes to chronic diseases.

Implementing the Cancer Victor® Lifestyle

2 days post-treatment



During chemotherapy, I fortified my body with wholesome food, nutritional supplements and exercise. Shortly after surgeons cracked open my chest to remove the lymphoma tumor, I resumed exercise with gentle movement. I was quite a sight as I slowly paced the hospital corridors, bandaged and jangling tubes of painkillers! Friends helped me avoid the pathetically deficient hospital food by bringing in organic, whole foods. I also took plant-based compounds and enzymes to accelerate healing and decrease inflammation. Within 12 weeks I was back in my office treating patients.

2 months post-treatment



I continued eating the most nutritious food available, juicing vegetables and fruits, as well as taking nutritional supplements, including enzymes and essential fatty acids from fish oils. My lungs had collapsed during surgery, so I performed deep-breathing exercises to expand them. The breath work also helped me relax! To oxygenate my blood and further expand my lung capacity, I walked on a treadmill. After 10 weeks of gradually building my endurance, I was able to return to the gym.

5 years post-treatment



I was determined to reap the benefits of exercise, which restored my appetite and boosted my immune system. At the gym I focused on regaining strength and building muscle. In addition to cardio and weight training, I practiced tai chi, a martial art that emphasizes slow movement. I modified my nutrition and supplements in response to regular testing for inflammation and hormonal imbalances. As a result, I was able to reverse the damage from treatment, including fatigue, anemia, hormonal imbalances and thyroid problems.

I'm not merely cancer-free: I've rebuilt myself. As a Cancer Victor I enjoy all the flavors of life! Today I concentrate on sharing the therapeutic Cancer Victor® lifestyle, healing the damage of cancer treatment and preventing cancer's return. What I did for myself, I can do for you.



You've survived cancer treatment with all its complications.

Now what? You don't become a Cancer Victor with a pill or even a program. The Cancer Victor adopts a whole new mindset, way beyond mere survival. You join a movement!

According to the Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion's 2009 report, *The Power of Prevention*, the total number of Americans living with a previous diagnosis of cancer, currently estimated at 11 million, is on the rise. However, these statistics do not dictate your destiny.

The scientific research is clear: an unhealthy lifestyle is the single biggest risk factor in cancer's onset and return after treatment. Lifestyle factors like poor nutrition, too little physical activity, obesity, unresolved stress, the use of tobacco and alcohol, and exposure to environmental toxins are the chief culprits in triggering cancer.

THESE ARE FACTORS THAT ARE WITHIN YOUR CONTROL.

It's time to regard cancer for what it is: a chronic disease that you can manage successfully once you have the information and motivation to adopt the Cancer Victor® lifestyle.

As a Cancer Victor, you embrace the chance to do everything you can to prevent the return of cancer. And you spread the word to let others know you have moved beyond cancer survival; you have taken control of your life and health.

Avoiding cancer is just one benefit of the Cancer Victor movement. By changing your lifestyle, you will be attacking the root causes of all chronic diseases, including heart disease, hypertension, stroke, diabetes, arthritis and obesity.

Yes, the Cancer Victor's therapeutic lifestyle helps you live longer after cancer treatment. But even more important, you'll enjoy your life! That's the true victory.

Contact us for information and resources on the Cancer Victor® movement and lifestyle.



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