



cancer as a systemic disease, which it is, we think of it as a loco-regional problem that can be cornered and killed. But, the possibility of completely removing cancer through surgery is limited. As Andrew Weil, M.D., Harvard-trained physician and advocate of integrative medicine, points out in *Spontaneous Healing* (Knopf, 1995), "In far too many cases, cancer has already spread to more than one site by the time of its discovery or is somewhere in the body that is beyond the reach of a surgical cure."

Similarly, another common treatment for cancer—chemotherapy—is not always the best option. Chemotherapy is an extreme treatment that uses toxic chemicals to tear down the body in general and, at the same time, destroys cancer. In addition, the types of cancers that it has been shown successful for is also limited. According to two oncologists, Albert B. Deisseroth, M.D., and Vincent T. DeVita, M.D., of Yale School of Medicine, in a 1995 issue of *Cancer Journal*, "... 90% of chemotherapeutic-drug cures

occur in only 10% of all cancer types."

The other big branch of cancer therapy seeks to strongly support the patient's immune system to control malignant growth. Immunotherapy draws on chemotherapeutic herbs, psychosocial support, dietary changes, visualization and anything else that may kick the immune system into gear. The focus of treatment in this model is not to diagnose and fix a broken machine, but to cultivate a healthy garden in your body, mind and spirit. Many of the immune-building therapies do not promise a cure, but can empower you with an effective framework to manage and live with cancer for years beyond physicians' expectations. In *Spontaneous Healing*, Weil supports the wisdom of immunotherapy. "Cells turn malignant constantly, and normally the healing system eliminates them," he says. "... Cancer will always be with us. Prevention remains the best strategy for managing it, and that depends on the integrity of the healing system."

After Diagnosis: Seven Steps to Healing

The most valuable step after a cancer diagnosis is becoming an active participant in your healing. Here's how.

1) REDUCE ALL STRESS. The ability to calm yourself in the midst of a busy world has been proven by Herbert Benson, M.D., of Harvard Medical School to provoke distinct physiological changes, including muscular relaxation and the slowing of the heart rate, respiration and brain waves. He put all his evidence into a book called *The Relaxation Response* (Avon, 1990—first published in 1975) and proved that it promotes health. This is a learned state of mind. Meditation, hypnosis and guided imagery are all worth exploring.

2) EDUCATE YOURSELF AND FIND A HEALTH-CARE PROFESSIONAL WHOM YOU FEEL YOU CAN TRUST. One of the most

TREATMENT RESOURCES

Here are six promising alternative treatment resources for people diagnosed with cancer.

1) **Commonweal Cancer Help**

Program: This is a one-week retreat for cancer patients intended to reduce stress and help them to explore treatment options and lifestyle changes. The Commonweal staff can also refer you to other programs. Contact them at P.O. Box 316, Bolinas, CA 94924; (415) 868-0970; or visit their Web site: www.commonweal.org.

2) **Traditional Chinese medicine**

(TCM): Most people know Chinese medicine as acupuncture, but other branches of this traditional medicine, such as herbalism, nutrition and exercise, are worth looking into. Seek out a practitioner who has experience with treating cancer patients. For referrals, contact the American Association of Oriental Medicine, (610) 266-1433; or in California, the California Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, (888) 432-5669. Another good place to find a practitioner is www.acupuncture.com.

3) Block Medical Center: This center was established by Keith Block, M.D., who became macrobiotic when conventional medicine was unable to cure an illness he developed shortly after entering medical school. Macrobiotics is an outlook on life that is

primarily known for its mostly vegetarian, high-complex-carbohydrate and low-fat diet. Block bases much of his program on macrobiotics. His staff designs individualized treatment programs integrating conventional and alternative treatments. Contact him at 1800 Sherman Ave., Suite 515, Evanston, IL 60201; (847) 492-3040.

4) The Moss Reports: Ralph Moss, Ph.D., is a world-renowned speaker, writer and researcher on cancer treatments. He publishes his findings in the *Moss Reports*, which costs \$275. The *Moss Reports*, 144 St. John's Place, Brooklyn, NY 11217; (718) 636-4433, or visit www.ralphmoss.com.

5) **Livingston Foundation Medical**

Center: Developed by Virginia C. Livingston, M.D., in 1971, these immunological treatments include diet, supplements, vaccines, counseling, detoxification and conventional drug therapy, which act to enhance immune response. Contact the center at 3232 Duke St., San Diego, CA 92110; (888) 777-7321.

6) Cancer Control Society: The non-profit Cancer Control Society provides public education on the prevention and control of cancer and other diseases through nutrition, tests and non-toxic alternative therapies. Contact them at 2043 N. Berendo St., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (323) 663-7801.