

## *Praise from Veterinarians, Authors & Book Reviewers*

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“The future is upon us and this **ground-breaking book** is a vital cornerstone. In dealing with cancer, our worst illness, this Survival Guide is educational, logical, expansive, embracing, honest – and so needed.”

Dr. Marty Goldstein, DVM  
Holistic veterinarian and Host, *Ask Martha Stewart's Vet* on Sirius Radio

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“The message of this book jumps off the written page and into the heart of every reader, and will become the *at home* **bible for cancer care of dogs**. The authors have given you a sensible and systematic approach that practicing veterinarians will cherish. I found the book inspiring and, clearly, it will become part of my daily approach to cancer therapy for my own patients.”

Dr. Robert B. Cohen, VMD  
Bay Street Animal Hospital, New York

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“Picking up *The Dog Cancer Survival Guide* is anything but a downer: it's an ‘empowerer.’ It will **make you feel like the best medical advocate for your dog**. It covers canine cancer topics to an unprecedented depth and breadth – from emotional coping strategies to prevention – in plain English. Read this book, and you will understand cancer stages, treatment options, and types, and much more. If you have just had the dreaded news, pick up a copy and it will guide the decisions your dog trusts you to make.”

Laure-Anne Viselé  
Dog behavior specialist and technical dog writer, CanisBonus.com

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“I wish that I had had *The Dog Cancer Survival Guide* when my dearly beloved Flat-coated Retriever, Odin, contracted cancer. It would have provided me alternative courses of action, as well as some well needed “reality checks” which were not available from conversations with my veterinarian. It should be on **every dog owner's book shelf**--just in case...”

Dr. Stanley Coren, PhD, FRSC  
author of many books, including *Born to Bark*

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“A comprehensive guide that **distills both alternative and allopathic cancer treatments in dogs**... With the overwhelming amount of conflicting information about cancer prevention and treatment, this book provides a pet owner with an easy to follow approach to one of the most serious diseases in animals.”

Dr. Barbara Royal, DVM  
The Royal Treatment Veterinary Center, Oprah Winfrey's Chicago veterinarian

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“Dr. Dressler and Dr. Ettinger have succeeded at the incredible task of writing a book that really helps pet parents who are struggling with the many decisions faced when their beloved animal has been diagnosed with cancer. Presenting and explaining **both complementary and conventional medical options for the treatment of cancer in ‘one book’ is a giant step** in the direction of ‘one medicine’ offering integrative medical choices to pet parents for the betterment of their animal’s health.”

Dr. Bob Goldstein, VMD  
Veterinary Director for Healing Center for Animals, Westport CT

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“*The Dog Cancer Survival Guide* is a great resource for pet parents whose dogs have been diagnosed with cancer. This **easy-to-read book** provides important information about canine cancers and discusses both conventional and holistic treatment options. Besides being informative, the book helps guide people as they navigate through a difficult and emotional path.”

Dr. Ruth MacPete, DVM  
Practicing veterinarian, writer and media personality

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“As a holistic dog care author, I knew exactly which experts to consult when my sweet Maltese Jiggy developed a large liver tumor. But even with advice from a top cancer specialist and help from a half dozen veterinary friends, I still had numerous questions. Exactly how should I adjust Jiggy’s diet? What supplements should I add? What else could I do to help him? I found the answers I sought and more in Dr. Dressler’s book. I was particularly impressed by the thoroughness of the information. The book is easy to read, but **wonderfully complete**. If your dog has cancer, I urge you to get two things: a second opinion ... and this book.”

Jan Rasmusen  
National award-winning author, *Scared Poopless: The Straight Scoop on Dog Care*

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“*The Dog Cancer Survival Guide* is **indispensable reading** for any dog owner dealing with cancer... this book guides, supports and educates you!”

Pennie Clark Ianniciello  
Costco Book Buyer

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“*The Dog Cancer Survival Guide* is like a **crash course in canine cancer for the layperson**. It takes a bit of the mystery out of the dreaded disease by teaching some of the what, why, and how regarding cancer and cancer treatment. After reading it, you will be better equipped to help your best friend live life to the fullest, regardless of the prognosis.”

Therese Kopiwoda  
Pet Blogger and Founder of PetsitUSA.com

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## Praise from Readers

**True Tails** from Readers of *The Dog Cancer Survival Guide, First Edition*

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### Caesar Smashed the Statistics Because of This Book

“Caesar was diagnosed with a Mast Cell Tumor Grade/Stage III when he was just over a year old. We had a clean removal of the tumor from his inner rear thigh, and began chemo very shortly after. It was a very scary time, but we were fortunate to have a great vet who made some fantastic recommendations to a local pet store. The pet store owner made a recommendation to a lady who specifically deals with Boxers, and she recommended *The Dog Cancer Survival Guide*. We have recommended the guide to our vet and anyone we know who is going through this horrible process. Caesar has six month checkups and he is now approaching four years old. He has smashed most of the statistics out there and I directly attribute that to Dr. Dressler’s book, our support group and the diet he is now on.”

—MATT CANTINE, WHITE HOUSE, TENNESSEE

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### The Only Comprehensive Research ... With a Personal Touch

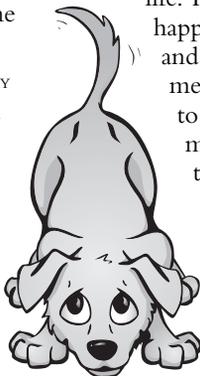
“Dr. Dressler’s book was the only comprehensive research I was able to find on this subject. I found it to be thorough when dealing with all aspects of cancer in dogs with a personal touch that made me feel that he was addressing me personally.”

—MIKE BERTULEIT, BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY

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### Our Reference

“We learned a significant amount from the book, and we continue to use it as a reference. Our standard poodle has had a tremendous boost out of chemo (there has been only one round of the 19 week protocol), and we are now at over nineteen



months since the end of chemo and we are approaching two years since diagnosis. Apocaps is central to her regimen still, and we use and have used many other recommendations from the book as well. She has lived, and more importantly she has thrived, well beyond the statistical norm, and we credit the book and Apocaps for much of that success. Dr. Dressler is honest and realistic about prognosis, and yet he offers hope and evidence-based advice, and the learned and professional integration of conventional and alternative approaches is something that we did not find anywhere else.”

—BOB ANDERSEN, BROADWAY, VIRGINIA

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### Eighteen Months (and Counting) Without Spending \$10,000

“The radiation oncologist that we saw after the tumor was removed suggested five weeks of radiation, for five days a week, all for the “small price” of \$10,000! They only did the treatments between 8am and noon, making it virtually impossible for anyone who holds a job, but you could leave your dog there for the day for an additional charge of \$35 per day!! I was beside myself, but I also just wanted it all to go away, so initially, I was willing to pay. However, the more I thought about what that would be like for Yoda, I couldn’t bring myself to do that. I thought, if his days are indeed numbered, I don’t want to burn his little leg so that he can’t run and chase bunnies and squirrels and deer. It was about the quality of his life. I had to find an alternative, and I couldn’t be happier with the outcome. The radiation oncologist and his vet told me that if I didn’t have the treatment done, his tumor would grow back in three to six months. Well it has been one year and six months and the growth hasn’t come back! Certainly, he is aging and isn’t as agile and playful as he was when he was a puppy, but his 10th birthday is April 30th and I couldn’t be more happy! Ever since I adopted him (three days prior to his first birthday!) he has had a steak for his birthday. This year I may make it a filet mignon! THANK YOU for your book,

because it gave me the support, strength and encouragement I needed to turn this entire situation from doom-and-gloom to complete possibility for something different.”

– LORI, BETHESDA, MARYLAND

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## Took Me by the Hand ... and Became My “Bible”

“I read *The Dog Cancer Survival Guide* fervently. It has become my “bible” in taking care of my dog. This book has helped not only my dog feel better, but me, too!!! Any dog lover who is facing cancer in a beloved dog truly needs to read and devour the information in *The Dog Cancer Survival Guide*. This amazing book “took me by the hand” and has given me avenues that I never would have known about otherwise. I cannot recommend this amazing book enough or sing its praises loud enough!!! Thank you, Thank you, Thank you, Thank you, Dr. Dressler!!!”

– CYNTHIA MCKINNON, SANFORD, FLORIDA

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## Helped Me Make Better Decisions: Worth Every Penny

“This book was extremely helpful to me. Even if it had not helped extend Apollo’s life – which I am convinced it did as we were given maybe 6 months and we got 18 months – it explains things that you didn’t hear at your appointment or were too overwhelmed to absorb. It helped me understand how canine cancer works and what to expect. This also prepared me for Apollo’s appointments because I was able to ask educated questions and feel that I was a part of his healthcare team and not just his advocate. This book helped me make better decisions for Apollo so that we could preserve his quality of life for as long as possible. There are a lot of sad truths in this book that as a dog owner suffering from cancer, you don’t really want to read ... but they are helpful. This book was worth every penny and I would (and have) recommended it to anyone who has a dog diagnosed with cancer.”

– SANDY MILLER, PALO, IOWA



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## Even the Vet Thinks “We Beat This”

“My dog is a beagle named Gordon. We rescued him in 2000; we don’t know how old he was at the time. In September of 2009 he suddenly got very sick. “Critically ill” my vet said. He ended up having a splenectomy. Lab results of the biopsy: hemangiosarcoma. Median life expectancy: 3-6 months. I asked the vet every question I could hoping there was a sliver of hope. Could the lab results be wrong? Could the splenectomy have removed all the cancer cells? Has a dog ever beat it? Our family agreed we didn’t want to put him through any chemo or radiation. Well, a few weeks later I had Dr. Dressler’s book in my hand and was following his Full Spectrum cancer care. I was cautiously optimistic. It’s been 18 months since his surgery and he’s doing great. The vet has even said that he “thinks we beat this.” I’ve made some adjustments accordingly, but I still make Gordon’s food and use the supplements according to Dr. Dressler’s recommendation. I credit Dr. Dressler and his research and his book every bit as much as my vet and his surgery for saving Gordon’s life.”

– KIM GAU, STOW, OHIO

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## No Regrets

“When I heard the diagnosis that my dog had cancer I had no idea where to start, what to do. After taking some time to contemplate what was in front of us, I realized I needed more than just “medical” language, more than just a clinical approach. I needed a game plan for us and for our dog. I know her and love her and needed to make the right choices. The bottom line for me was “no regrets”. I needed to make sure I understood the range of alternatives available, that I was making choices that were “right” given all the circumstances and that I would have peace whatever the outcome. The Dog Cancer Survival Guide gave me a starting place, empowered me to ask questions, push for alternatives, challenge the status quo and change the landscape. Whatever happens now, there will be no regrets on my part.”

– VALERIE SACHS, PEPPER PIKE, OH

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## An Answer to Our Prayers

“When we first found out that our ten year-old Labrador had cancer, we had a sonogram done of his entire body. It showed that the cancer, which had started in his anal gland, had spread to several of his lymph glands, some of which were grossly enlarged. The vet, on seeing the sonogram results, told us our dog had 6 to 8 weeks to live. We immediately started using the strategies in Dr. Dressler’s book, including the high-protein, low-carb diet, the cancer-busting supplements, the immunity-strengthening methods, and the self-esteem building activities. We first used alternated using Luteolin and EGCG, as well as Doxycycline, Modified Citrus Pectin, K-9 Immunity and Transfer Factor, Multivitamins, and Fish Oil. Then, when Apocaps came on the market, we used only Apocaps, along with the K-9 Immunity and Transfer Factor, Multivitamins, and Fish Oil. We used all of Dr. Dressler’s immune boosting strategies, including having our dog in a completely dark room for nine hours of sleep each night. We gave our dog some type of exercise every day, whether it was a short walk, chasing a Frisbee in the yard, or playing ball in the house. We also played fetch and tug-of-war games with him. We also gave him hugs and plenty of petting every day. You could tell that he was happy...his tail was always wagging. Our dog lived not only 8 weeks, but 18 MONTHS longer, largely, we believe, due to Dr. Dressler’s suggestions. He amazed every veterinarian we knew! We were so thankful to have the blessing of this extra time with him. In addition, his quality of life during all these extra months was very good. He was not constantly nauseous and fatigued, as he would have been if we had pursued chemotherapy. He was his normal, happy, energetic self. And when we realized the end was finally near, Dr. Dressler’s advice on how to make the final decision and how to deal with the stress and sadness of losing our beloved friend really helped us. I can’t tell you how thankful we are for this book! It was truly an answer to our prayers.”

— HEATHER G., SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



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## Like Having a Second (or Third) Opinion

“Having *The Dog Cancer Survival Guide* is truly like having a second opinion (in my case a third, along with my general practice vet and the canine oncologist overseeing Sparkle’s treatment). It was so reassuring to me to have good questions to ask, and to see that what my vets are recommending agree with Dr. Dressler.”

— SUSAN MCKAY, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

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## If She Didn’t Look at His Chart, “She’d Never Know Buddy Was Sick”

“I was devastated when I learned Buddy’s cancer had returned. The same ache in my stomach, the tearing of my heart came back. He had seemed to recover nicely from the melanoma. I had great vets. His affected toe had been amputated. His previous x-rays were clear. How could this have happened again? I immediately started searching the internet. The news was so grim that I felt nothing but despair. How could I watch my pet, my friend, suffer through this? I clicked on Dr. Dressler’s site and scanned the info on his book. I realized that I had to play an active role in Buddy’s” treatment. I immediately ordered the book (e-mail copy.) I downloaded the 300+ pages as soon as i got home from school and began reading. While the news was still alarming I began to feel a little hope. Notes and read up on the research cited. I jotted down questions and was ready form my initial appointment with Buddy’s new oncologist. I listened, questioned, and re-hashed what the oncologist explained to me. I quizzed her about her background, research practices and philosophy of medicine. I was amazed she actually agreed about the medication (doxycycline) to give to Buddy. I began Buddy on the Apocaps and massage therapy. We began daily walks and a dietary change from Beneful to an almost grain-free dog food. I spent more time telling him how grateful I was to him and much more time on my knees praying for a miracle. I began to “beef up” Buddy’s weight and chart his progress. I held my breath and expected the worse. It hasn’t happened yet. Buddy’s

blood count is great, his weight is up and his attitude is wonderful. While the doctor says is too soon to tell, she has suggested that he is getting better. She has actually said on more than one occasion that if she didn't have Buddy's chart in front of her she would never suspect he was at all sick. I keep waiting for the miracle of Buddy being healed. In the meantime, I know there are options to sitting back and letting the worse happen. I am more optimistic and grateful for Dr. Dressler's book. It has brought me closer to God, given me hope for the future, peace of mind, and avenues to follow to help Buddy and the rest of my family cope with this "trying" situation."

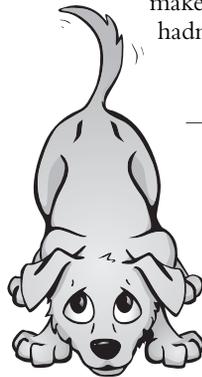
- DEBBIE GRANGER, CHESTERFIELD, MISSOURI

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### Grateful for Real Information Backed by Real Research

"We were very grateful to find such a resource as this book. There is so much misinformation on the net and so many self-proclaimed or new age experts today, it was a blessing to find real information backed by real research. Thank you!"

- STEVEN McAfee, FORT WAYNE, INDIANA



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### Nothing Is Sugar Coated

"DO NOT GIVE UP! Read the book, cry, laugh, and love with your pet. Use the book to formulate a realistic game plan in regards to attacking the disease to the best of your abilities. When you love a pet as evidently you do (given you found this book and Dr. D), you'll find trying will make a world of difference to you and will reflect on your pet as well. It was well worth the time, effort and money spent and I would pay tenfold for this information. Dr. Dressler presented everything in a REAL light. Nothing was sugar coated but at the same time the recommendations all had supporting information as to the "why" this can work, and how the research has come about."

- JULIAN TREVINO, ROSEVILLE, MICHIGAN

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### You Won't Be Disappointed

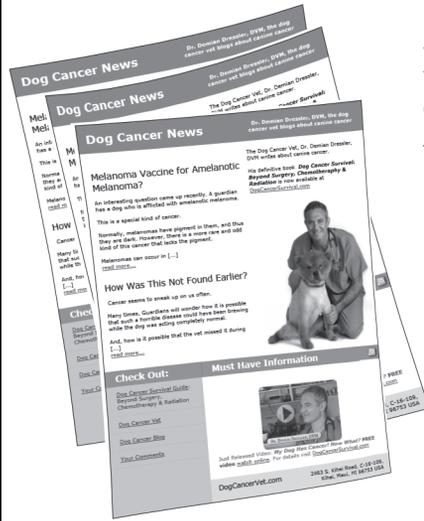
"Buy this book; you won't be disappointed. It will help you prepare yourself for all the challenges that come along with your dog having cancer. So many of the things he recommends seem so logical and are things you need to do to help yourself before you can help your dog. You find yourself saying "Wow, this makes so much sense" but yet it was something you hadn't actually thought of yourself."

- CHRISTINE DARG, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

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*Vetted by Dr. Dressler*

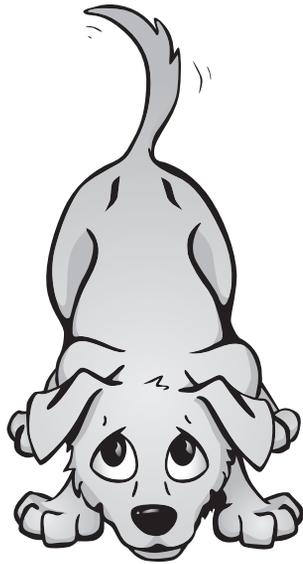
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# The Dog Cancer Survival Guide

*Full Spectrum Treatments to  
Optimize Your Dog's Life Quality & Longevity*

Dr. Demian Dressler, DVM

*with Dr. Susan Ettinger, DVM, Dip. ACVIM*  
Diplomate American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (Oncology)



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By Dr. Demian Dressler, DVM  
with Dr. Susan Ettinger, DVM, Dip. ACVIM  
Edited by Molly Jacobson

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Second Edition

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# Introduction

Glenda watched as I examined Max,<sup>1</sup> her nine-year-old Golden Retriever.<sup>2</sup> The surgical stitches from his bone biopsy looked fine: no swelling, no irritation, and a nice, clean mark. He would barely have a scar. Unfortunately, a scar was the least of his problems. I scratched his rump, and his big flag of a tail wagged in response. I turned to Glenda. “How has he been doing since his bone biopsy?”

“You were right about using cream cheese to hide his pills – he took them with no complaints ... but he’s still limping.” She paused. “Did you get the report?”

“Yes, the biopsy report came in this morning,” I said, rocking my head back and forth to loosen my neck. “The area of bone I showed you on the X-ray does not look good. It’s a cancer named osteosarcoma.”

Glenda looked like she’d been slapped. *Please don’t cry*, I thought.

“What?”

“Osteosarcoma. Max has bone cancer.”

“So my dog is going to die of cancer?”

“Well, we have different options. It’s a little early to say how things will turn out,” I dodged. I wasn’t sure she was really ready to hear the survival statistics or contemplate the complex choices ahead of her.

“I thought you said this was an *infection*. You said it looked like an infection on the X-ray. I’m having a hard time believing what you’re telling me.”

“Infection was one of the possibilities we discussed. The other main possibility was cancer. Sometimes the two can look similar on an X-ray. We did the biopsy so we could be sure of the diagnosis. I’m really sorry. I wish the biopsy had come back negative.”

Glenda placed one hand on her forehead, fingers shading her eyes. Her other hand dropped to Max’s head as he leaned against her thigh. I waited, ready to offer tissues. After a moment, Glenda

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<sup>1</sup>Not their real names. Throughout this book I will use real stories from my veterinary practice to illustrate important concepts and ideas. To protect the privacy of my clients and ensure clarity, I combine circumstances and client stories and change names and identifying factors. There are a few exceptions, which I note in the text. Readers of the previous edition of *The Dog Cancer Survival Guide* have also submitted stories about their own dogs, and these stories are clearly marked as “True Tails.”

<sup>2</sup>Traditionally, breed names are not capitalized unless there is a proper name (English bulldog, Labrador retriever, etc.). I am breaking this grammatical rule by capitalizing every breed name, because, one, the text flows better that way, and, two, I don’t want readers to think I am favoring some breeds over others.

wiped her eyes and cleared her throat.

“What are the options?”

Here we go, I thought, it’s not going to get any easier to tell her this, so just start talking.

“The treatment options are surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation.”

It was hard to look directly into Glenda’s eyes, so I shuffled the papers in Max’s file as I continued.

“Surgery, in the case of bone cancer, means amputation. Yes, dogs can walk on three legs, but no, it likely will not cure the cancer in the end.

This cancer has usually spread through the body by the time it is diagnosed. Without treatment, median survival is about two months, and owners usually choose to euthanize the dog because of the decline in life quality.

Chemotherapy added to the surgery extends median survival time to about ten months to a year, give or take.

Radiation can take away the pain for a few months, usually four or five.”

I was finished listing treatments, so I stopped talking.

“Is that all? That’s it?” Glenda whispered.

“Yes,” I confirmed. “Those are the options we have.”

“But, I, I mean...” Glenda stammered, “How, how did Max even get this?”

I resumed my standard cancer lecture.

“No one really knows exactly how cancer starts. It’s a multi-factorial disease, which means many things can increase the odds of its happening.”

“Is it his food?”

“Well, not really.”

“I have heard vaccines can do it. What about toxins or something? Should he be wearing sunscreen?”

There was no one way to answer Glenda’s questions, but, I didn’t know how to explain that to her.

“We don’t know the actual cause of cancer. The person who figures that out will get the Nobel Prize.” I trailed off. Helping Glenda to understand and deal with Max’s cancer diagnosis could take hours, and the next client was waiting.

We both knew I was avoiding her questions.

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Glenda sighed and asked for some time to digest the bad news. I agreed, took out Max's sutures, dispensed more pain medication, and showed them out.

The visit had taken over half an hour. *I'm late*, I thought as I hurried Glenda's paperwork to the receptionist. *I've got to get back in the game and treat my next patient.*

The rest of the day was busy. I had few breaks, and those were filled with paperwork, ordering prescriptions and running my hospital. I felt distracted. Max's big brown eyes kept showing up in my thoughts. I saw him wagging his tail at me and comforting Glenda. *Dogs can be so generous. Too bad we're not more like them.*

I didn't know it yet, but Max's generosity was about to inspire a change in my career.

It's not unusual to feel exhausted at the end of a day filled with broken bones, infections, heart disease, diabetes and cancer, but that evening found me particularly drained; Max's predicament was still weighing on my mind.

I had recently noticed that more and more cancer cases were showing up in my practice. I repeated the same lines over and over: "Your dog has cancer ... radiation, surgery, chemotherapy ... crummy statistics ... no other options." Then, short on time, as most vets are, I hurried the poor dog lovers out the door, leaving them to wipe their eyes and wonder what to do.

*I'm a healer*, I thought, as I walked to my car. *Why couldn't I help more? How could I leave Glenda crying and Max still sick? I want to be able to do more. I'm tired of going home at night, feeling powerless and demoralized.*

*Something is very wrong.*

If I hadn't been so physically, emotionally, and mentally tired, I may have shrugged off these thoughts. But, something was different that night. Max had gotten to me somehow. So, instead, I contemplated these thoughts, especially the last one.

*Something is very wrong.*

*Could that really be true? And if it were true, was there something I could do about it? Could I make what was wrong right?*

I graduated from Cornell University, the top veterinary school in the country<sup>3</sup>. I had been practicing fifty to sixty hours per week since 1997. I had loads of information cemented into my brain, and incredible experience. And yet, I could not cure Max's cancer. I couldn't cure cancer in most of my patients.

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<sup>3</sup>U.S. News & World Reports.

Glenda's world had turned upside down today, and I couldn't give her what she really needed: good answers, a solid plan, and (maybe just as important), hope and comfort.

My tired mind raced on. *What if there are other options? What else is there? There must be more to know, and there must be better tools. There are so many medical systems I have never used. What if I haven't learned all there is to learn?*

This may not sound like a radical train of thought to you, but for a conventional vet, it's tantamount to heresy. I have been trained to be skeptical of any practice, herb, technique, or medicine that has not been proven to work in a double-blind, placebo-controlled study. Unless it met this "gold standard," I scoffed at the treatment as unlikely to work ... and trying it would be a waste of time, money, or both.

Until that night, I thought this was a scientific mindset. But now, I wondered if I was just closed-minded.

By the time I turned into my driveway, I was questioning everything.

*Did Max's diet actually contribute to his cancer? What about vaccines? Do toxins in our environment affect dogs?* My first-rate veterinary education had never addressed many of these angles.

My conscience nagged me. *What did I really know?* It had been a few years since I left school. I had had little time to keep up with the latest research.

*When did I last read original cancer literature? Are chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery **really** all that veterinary medicine can offer Max? Is he getting short-changed? What else can I do besides what I have been trained to do? There must be more options!*

Since that night, I have been searching for the answers to these and many more questions. I rediscovered a passion for research, and have been tireless in my search for answers about the causes of dog cancer and, of course, the best treatments. As it turns out, there are more options, and there is more we can do.

## *Your Survival Guide*

"Cancer" is the last word dog lovers want to hear from their veterinarian. Many feel their dogs are part of the family, and those two syllables can release a torrent of fear, confusion, anger, guilt, and grief, just as if a human family member were sick. I've seen clients "numb out" in front of me, burst into disbelieving, hysterical laughter or violent rages, and even threaten suicide.

I can understand where these extreme responses come from, because I am a lifelong dog lover, too. At first, this diagnosis can seem as urgent, hopeless, and final as a tsunami towering on the horizon.

Dog cancer *is* an emergency, and if it is the tsunami you are facing, think of this book as your

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survival guide. When tsunami warnings sound in my home state of Hawaii, authorities remind us to pack food and water, gather our loved ones, and quickly but calmly move to higher ground.

In that spirit, this book is written to help you calm down, think clearly, and choose wisely from among the tools that have been credibly shown to help canine cancer.

## *Full Spectrum Cancer Care*

Every cancer case is as unique as the dog herself<sup>†</sup>, but it's also true that cancer cases are similar to each other. Cancers can be similar in how they begin, develop, spread, and affect surrounding tissues. On the other side of the equation, the body always mobilizes certain systems to try to fight off the cancer.

By taking a bird's eye view of dog cancer and accounting for these common factors, I've developed a standard plan that can be used to target any dog cancer diagnosis, no matter what type it may be. I call my approach Full Spectrum cancer care because it includes everything I've found that has been shown to be helpful for dogs with cancer.

Conventional western medical tools are included, but my Full Spectrum approach also includes the very best options from alternative medicine, botanical nutraceuticals, supplements, strategic immune system boosters, nutrition, emotional management strategies, and even some cutting edge mind-body medicine techniques that deliberately modify brain chemistry.

## *There's No Expiration Date*

You may have heard “there's nothing we can do,” or “the only options are chemotherapy and radiation.”

You may have heard your dog has one week or two months or six months left.

It doesn't matter what you've heard. No one has a crystal ball, no matter how many letters or credentials line up after his name. These estimates – and, by the way, most of the numbers in this book – are educated guesses, based on general rules of thumb.

As you'll learn later, not even veterinary oncologists (animal cancer specialists) all agree on those rules of thumb. **Your individual dog does not have an expiration date, and there is plenty you can do to help.**

Imagine looking back at this time in your life, five years from now, and having not a single regret. You can help your dog fight cancer, and, just as important – maybe more important – you can honor your dog's life by living each moment to the fullest, starting now.

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<sup>†</sup>It is clumsy to refer to dogs as he/she, so I alternate their genders throughout this book. I do the same when referring to veterinarians and other professionals.

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*Your individual dog does not have an expiration date, and there is plenty you can do to help. Imagine looking back at this time in your life five years from now and having not a single regret.*  
————— • —————

We both have jobs here. My job is to lay out a well-researched, practical and comprehensive survival guide, including every available tool credibly shown to help fight cancer and help your dog.

Your job is to take a deep breath (you'll learn later why breathing is so important), read, and take action on what you learn.

Even if you feel miserable right now, reading this book is an act of hope and optimism. This is good news, because, in my experience, the pragmatic dog lover who is willing to learn does the best job of dealing with and fighting dog cancer.

## *The Dog Cancer Vet*

I'm a skeptic by nature, so if an author claims to know something about a subject, I want to know a little bit about him before I give him my trust. No matter who we may be, we all have our own experiences, perspectives, and objectives. Knowing something about the author's background helps me to understand how he arrives at his conclusions, and whether he may have any underlying biases or a hidden agenda.

I recommend you adopt a similar attitude as you learn about your dog's cancer. Take everything you hear and read (even in this book) with a grain of salt. As you'll discover, cancer is not simple, and there are many competing theories, treatments and approaches. What works for one dog may not work for another.

At this time there is no one cure for systemic cancer and, therefore, no absolute right way to treat it. With all of the possibilities out there, you will need to use discernment to weigh all the factors and find the best way to treat your dog's cancer.

In the spirit of full disclosure, I'm going to tell you a little more about my own story, so you can get to know me, and be alert to my particular biases and attitudes.

First things first: I am a dog lover, through and through. When clients tell me their dog is their best friend, I know exactly what they mean. If loving dogs is genetic, I inherited it from my mother, Lucy. She is the founder of the Pacific Primate Sanctuary on Maui, and yet, she still finds room in her home and heart for a pack of five Chihuahuas. My love of dogs gives me a unique understanding of how painful it is to have a dog with cancer, and that has helped me to write this book.

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Second (and this is important): I am not an oncologist. I am a general practice vet who works in one of the most isolated places on Earth. Hawaii is about 3,000 miles from California, in the middle of the Pacific. There are very few veterinary specialists; I simply don't have the option to refer advanced cases out of my practice. I deal with every type of animal illness and concern, every day. This makes my experience broad and very wide in scope compared to many of my colleagues on the mainland. I am sometimes forced to take a broad view of illnesses and look for overall patterns to help me treat patients, and this can result in unusual methods and unconventional ideas.

Even though I'm not an oncologist, I've been nicknamed the "dog cancer vet" by readers and clients, because of my special interest in canine cancer, which was sparked by Max. I spend my extra time devoted to researching and writing about it on my blog [www.DogCancerBlog.com](http://www.DogCancerBlog.com).

I've studied every aspect of canine cancer treatment. I read oncology textbooks cover to cover. I pore over every paper I can find. I talk to every researcher I can get on the phone and pepper those I can't with emails. I fly to veterinary oncology conferences and follow every lead that presents itself in my search for dog cancer answers.

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*"The pragmatic dog lover,  
who is willing to learn does the  
best job of dealing with and  
fighting dog cancer."*  
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Until I started this research, I identified myself as a conventional vet. I did not have much respect for "alternative" or "holistic" vets who – in my opinion – were not as scientific as I.

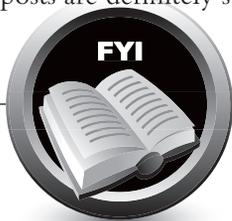
But over time, as I followed leads offered by cutting-edge research, I found myself going, in a sense, "down the rabbit hole." Like Alice entering Wonderland, things no longer appeared black and white. Rules I had lived by seemed to bend. Assumptions I'd been taught were turned upside down. I found myself venturing far from conventional medicine: first into alternative medicine, and then beyond, to places, theories, and therapies I never would have guessed had anything to do with treating cancer.

I started applying what I had learned with dogs in my practice, and saw results I could never have expected. Not everything worked perfectly, or worked exactly as I hoped it would. But it was surprising to me how many therapies, beyond chemotherapy, surgery, and radiation, can help a dog with cancer.

In the first years of my research, I was really burning the midnight oil, while still running my full-time veterinary hospital. I was glad to be helping the dogs in my practice, of course; what bugged me was that this information was scattered all over the place.

Just like many dog lovers who get a cancer diagnosis, I had started with the Internet as my first source of information, and boy, was there a lot of it out there. Some of it, I just couldn't stomach. On-

line forums and blogs are filled with people sharing their own stories or recommendations – but how much of this can be trusted? When I look at them from a medical perspective (even my expanded one), many posts are definitely suspect.



## Dogs and Humans: Closer Than We Know

When it comes to cancer, dogs are physiologically very similar to humans: so much so that they are often the preferred test animals in human cancer treatment trials. Because of this, most veterinary cancer treatments actually come from human medicine. (Only two drugs have been FDA-approved specifically for dog cancer, both very recently.) Usually, once a treatment has been approved for human use, vets start evaluating it in dogs, including optimal dosing schedules and possible side effects.

Knowing this, I decided to try using botanicals that are currently being tested for use in humans. We will likely use them in dogs eventually, so why wait ten or twenty years for human approval, when cancer is the number one killer of dogs today?

\*You'll see sidebars like this one used throughout this book. These special sections add to or enhance the regular text.

## *Simple but Powerful*

After sifting through personal anecdotes, hyperbole, outright product sales pitches and miscellaneous gobbledygook, what I found really shifted my entire medical perspective on animal health and disease.

Some very simple lifestyle shifts may help fight cancer, for example: changing the diet and using certain supplements.

I also learned how much emotions impact disease development in humans, and was impressed by the possibility that our dogs' emotions could impact canine cancer development. Our own human emotions, by influencing our thought processes, could also ultimately have an impact on the outcome of canine cancer.

I was surprised to find that some cutting-edge human cancer research is not looking for a cure in isolated chemicals. Instead, these research labs are exploring natural botanicals – agents found in plants – which induce apoptosis in cancer cells.

Apoptosis is the completely normal process that causes the natural death of a cell when it has lived to the end of its life. Cancer cells can turn apoptosis off, allowing themselves to grow indefinitely, at the expense of the body. Certain botanicals, called “apoptogens,” can turn apoptosis back on in the cancer cell, causing it to die a natural death (or, in the more colorful language of cancer researchers, “commit cell suicide”).

I wrote about all of this cutting-edge research,

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including information about some powerful apoptogens, in the first edition of this book. I received three main pieces of feedback about that edition:

The emotional management tools really helped dog lovers to calm down, think clearly and choose wisely.

Dogs like the diet I recommend, and it seems to help them feel better.

The apoptogens I recommend are not only effective, but also difficult to procure and clumsy to combine.

This feedback reflected the challenges I was having with my clients on Maui. Finding and preparing the apoptogens I recommend was tiresome and taking too much time out of already busy lives.

The good news was: these apoptogens, when given, were actually helping dogs. Dogs with lethargy and pain were perking up, sometimes within a day of taking the supplements. Even more exciting, some dogs (not all, but a significant number) experienced a shrinking of their tumors.

My natural skepticism had not let me imagine this outcome, and it was humbling to realize how much there was still to learn. As I continued to work with these cutting edge apoptogens, I grew happier with the results and ultimately decided to make them easier to find and administer and finally, invented a supplement. Today, you can find Apocaps online at Amazon.com (both in the U.S. and in Europe) and in veterinary practices across the U.S.

## *Backlash*

Not everyone has been happy with my work. I give some controversial advice, and I have received backlash from some of my colleagues, who believe their methods and livelihoods are being questioned. The “dog cancer vet” nickname rankles some oncologists, and I’ve even been threatened professionally. One blog comment I received – anonymous, but claiming to be from an oncologist – called me a “heretic” and warned me I was “playing with fire.”

I shared this with a sympathetic colleague, who reminded me of the story of Ignaz Semmelweis. After giving birth in his mid-1800’s Vienna hospital, mothers died of puerperal fever at a huge rate of 18%. Once his doctors were required to wash their hands after performing autopsies, the death rate dropped to just 2%. Semmelweis was an early proponent of the theory of germs (it inspired his policy change), which no one had yet proven to the satisfaction of the medical community. Despite his obvious success, he went to his grave discredited as a radical and a heretic. Years later, Louis Pasteur finally “proved” Semmelweis was correct in claiming that germs were responsible for, among other things, puerperal fever.

I take inspiration from Semmelweis, and many other thinkers and inventors, who take a wide-angle view to discover new methods. I’m hoping that by looking at dog cancer in this way, reviewing

the basics of how the body works, and looking ahead to future breakthroughs, we can find new angles and maybe – dare I say it? – even hope to cure cancer, someday.

## *I Meet Dr. Susan Ettinger (Again)*

After I invented Apocaps, it was clear the first edition of my book needed updating and revising. My publisher and I started planning the second edition.

During this time, I attended a veterinary oncology conference, where I ran into a friend from vet school, Dr. Susan Ettinger. Dr. Ettinger is a hotshot veterinary oncologist at the prestigious Animal Specialty Center, in Yonkers, New York.

After catching up with each other, Dr. Ettinger realized I was the vet who blogs at [www.DogCancerBlog.com](http://www.DogCancerBlog.com) and the author of this book. She narrowed her eyes and said, “Who supervised your section on oncology?” When I told her I had, she sniffed.

“You should have an oncologist do it.”

“Why don’t you?” I asked.

Our partnership makes perfect sense. As a medical oncologist in a large specialty practice, she prescribes chemotherapy every single day of her career ... but she’s open to new ideas and concepts. I’m interested in treatments beyond the conventional options ... but I don’t exclude them.

Luckily for all of us (although perhaps not so much for her very patient husband and two young sons), she agreed we would make a good team, and joined me as my co-author.

Dr. Ettinger’s contribution is invaluable. While most of the book is still in my voice, her experience and formal oncology training has informed every paragraph. She has expanded and solidified the scope of the section on conventional medicine, so much so that our editor asked her to write entire chapters in her own voice. Her section contains her best recommendations from conventional medicine for twelve common dog cancers.

Dr. Ettinger and I are physically separated by an ocean and a continent and our collaboration stretches one quarter of the way around the planet. It also spans the Full Spectrum of what’s available for canine cancer treatments. This book tells you everything we want you to know if your dog has cancer of any kind.

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## *How This Book Is Organized*

*The Dog Cancer Survival Guide, 2nd Edition*, is divided into five parts, plus five appendices and an index.

**Section I: My Dog Has Cancer, Now What?** This section covers a lot of ground, including how to tinker with your mindset, so you can make good decisions about your dog's cancer.

**Section II: What You Should Know about Dog Cancer** covers some of the most important things you must know about the root causes of cancer, so you can make good decisions for your dog.

**Section III: Full Spectrum Cancer Care** takes you through the five most important facets of cancer care: conventional medicine, apoptogens, strategic boosting of the immune system, diet, and modifying your dog's brain chemistry.

**Section IV: Making Confident Choices** gives you a step-by-step framework from which you can make decisions for your own dog's cancer case. There is also a section on end-of-life care, advice for working with your veterinarian or oncologist, and some advice about how to get and stay organized.

**Section V: From the Oncologist** is Dr. Ettinger's section of the book. She describes each of the twelve common canine cancers in detail, including lymphoma, mast cell tumors, mammary cancer, osteosarcoma, hemangiosarcoma, transitional cell carcinoma, oral cancers, malignant melanoma, nasal tumors, soft tissue sarcomas, brain tumors, and anal gland tumors. She gives her most up-to-date recommendations for treatments from a conventional perspective and discusses the most common chemotherapy drugs, including their side effects.

## *Two Authors, One Voice*

Writing about cancer is tricky, because so little is known *for sure*. While most of the time Dr. Ettinger and I agree with each other, we do disagree on some occasions. In these cases, it will be noted in the text, or you will see a sidebar explaining the difference in our perspectives.

My strongest recommendation is that you start at the beginning of the book and read all the way through, including Dr. Ettinger's chapter on your dog's cancer. When you do this, you will have learned how to handle your dog's cancer in the most thoughtful, compassionate, and "full spectrum" manner I can imagine.

## Sidebar Symbols

There are many sidebars throughout this book which contain information that enhances the main text or goes into great depth on a subject. Here are the symbols we use for each type of sidebar so you'll be able to "tell at a glance" what information is presented.



These sidebars allow me to present my ideas and get larger points across that may be only briefly discussed in the main text.



Because most of the book is my voice, it might sound like Dr. Ettinger isn't contributing. She is, of course, but these sidebars give her a chance to step out from "behind the scenes" and give her own thoughts in her own words.



These sidebars present information that is crucial to your understanding of the topic under discussion or for dog cancer in general.



If something was stated earlier that needs to be repeated, you'll be reminded in these sidebars.



These sidebars usually illustrate specific examples of what's being discussed in the main section.



These sidebars alert you if there are important exceptions to the topic under discussion.



As you'll find out, I look at cancer as a living system. In these sidebars I have the space to share this "wide angle view" with you.



You will see these sidebars when I need to remind you to consult with your vet for specific advice about the topic at hand.



These sidebars are written by readers of the first edition of this book. They are "true tails" of personal experiences with dog cancer. Each True Tail was written to – and for –

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you, the reader of this edition, by other dog lovers who have benefitted from this guide and my Full Spectrum approach. We could only include a fraction of those we received; but hopefully these voices will remind you that you are not the first one to deal with dog cancer. There are people who understand what you are going through, and have reached out deliberately to support you at this time.

### *This Book Does Not Substitute for Your Veterinarian's Guidance*

I want to remind you that this book is in no way a substitute for professional, in-person care from your own vet. Dr. Ettinger and I do not recommend you follow any advice for treating cancer without having a vet examine your dog and diagnose your dog.

A lot of what we recommend we would not advise for a healthy dog, or for a dog that is sick with an illness other than cancer. Because of this, I urge you to bring your vet into the conversation we have in these pages. This book is designed to help you work closely with him or her.

# Part I: My Dog Has Cancer ... Now What?

*In this section of the book we'll lay the foundation for Full Spectrum cancer care. We'll talk about your role in your dog's cancer care, answer the three most pressing questions dog lovers have and remind you of your dog's inherent "super powers," in preparation for learning more about dog cancer.*