

# An In-Depth Look at Holistic Treatments for Cancer

by Ihor Basko, DVM, CVA

**Editor's Note from [Cathy Alinovi](#):** In this third article about cancer in our pets, Dr Basko provides a very thorough listing of alternative treatments available. In holistic medicine, the entire patient is considered, not just the cancer. By treating the whole patient, better cancer fighting results can sometimes be achieved. Our pets deserve it.

So you've had the time to [process your emotions around your pet's cancer diagnosis](#), and have taken the steps to consider [your treatment options through conventional medicine](#).

Now you may be wondering if there are other, more natural treatment options that could be less invasive or safer, or more supportive of healing than just surgery or pain meds.

**In fact, there are many holistic options you can incorporate into your pet's treatment plan!**

And while there *are no magic bullets* or one singular option to cure or treat cancer in all pets, I've found that most pets do benefit from a holistic approach to their treatment plan (especially when combined with relevant treatments from conventional medicine).

Below, I'll cover some of the typical alternative treatments you can try independently, or in tandem with some of the conventional therapies suggested by your vet.

## The Key Difference Between Holistic and Conventional Therapies

*The holistic approach is focused on addressing the root issues of a disease, and isn't solely focused on managing the consequence of the disease (i.e. just killing/removing the tumor versus addressing the root of the cancer).*

Eastern Medicine seeks to "attack and address the cause" of the cancer, and eliminate more genetic damage to cells (which causes cells to mutate into cancers). This is achieved by taking a careful look at all potential factors that could have caused the root issue, and then correcting these issues one



by one, in addition to fighting the cancer itself.

Conventional medicine tactics can be very helpful in certain cases of cancer, but because of the high risk of side effects and adverse reactions associated with these kinds of treatments, it's always a good idea to increase immunity and support to the body by adding holistic components and natural therapies to your treatment plan.

**By using acupuncture, massage, topical liniments, special diets, medicinal mushrooms and herbs, and/or vitamins and antioxidants, your pet can be free of pain, the tumor suppressed, and the quality of life improved for quite awhile.**

These holistic treatments will require a lot more participation from pet owners who must continue the therapies at home for a longer period of time, but the benefits are well worth the extra effort.

### **How A Holistic Treatment Plan Is Created**

Before focusing on killing or dissipating the cancer, the patient's well being is evaluated and "weaknesses" such as anemia, kidney disease, liver dysfunction are supported with dietary changes and herbal tonics.

If the pet has had a history of exposure to heavy metals, chemicals and/or pesticides (which increases susceptibility to cancer), then the first step is help detox the pet's body by giving medicinal herbs and antioxidant supplements (which improve liver function and encourage elimination of these substances from the animal).

"Killing the cancer" is addressed through enhancing the immune system function and production of cancer killing cells such as NK cells, T lymphocytes, and other macrophages.

Herbs are used to address metastasis and prevent the spread of the cancerous cells. Many holistic veterinarians will also use many antioxidants that help suppress cancer cells in the body and prevent further DNA damage.

Of course, blood tests, X-rays, ultrasounds, and possibly biopsies, are also utilized to get an accurate diagnosis of the severity and type of cancer present.

It's also important to consider the interaction and condition of both the internal and external environments of your pet. These factors will all help determine which treatments will be most effective.

To identify the root cause of the cancer, it can be helpful to consider the following questions.

### **Is the cancer being caused by an internal issue?**

- \* How is the condition of the digestion, assimilation, and absorption of nutrients?
- \* Are there any dietary deficiencies of minerals, vitamins, essential oils, and antioxidants?
- \* Is there dietary excess of chemicals in the food, carbohydrates, or perhaps obesity?
- \* What is the condition of the blood and immune system?
- \* How is your pet's energy and stamina / vital energy/ Qi?
- \* What is your pet's genetic predisposition? *(For example, many purebred dogs have inherited cancer genes. The most susceptible breeds of dogs are: Dobermans, Rottweilers, Golden Retrievers, Boxers, Bernese Mountain Dogs, Great Danes, Alaskan Malamutes, Irish Setters, and German*

*Shepherd dogs).*

### **Or is the cancer being caused by an external issue?**

- \* Could it be stress-related (i.e. moving homes, separation anxiety, noise pollution, family disharmony)?
- \* Is there an overuse of chemicals on or in the pet (from flea and tick products, drugs, antibiotics, vaccinations and pesticides)?
- \* Could it be caused by radiation from the sun or computers, or electromagnetic radiation from high power lines?
- \* Could it be pollution-related (of food, water, soil, or air)?
- \* Are there parasites (fleas, ticks, worms, etc.)?
- \* Are there mold toxins in the environment or diet?

As you can see, a holistic approach requires more than just looking at the tumor and deciding how to get rid of it with surgery, chemo, or radiation.

It takes time, observation, and communication to get a clear picture of what has happened and why. Then we can set up a plan of action that can help not only stop the cancer growth, but prevent new cancers from developing.

### **So What Does A Holistic Treatment Plan Look Like?**

Not all holistic veterinarians will use the same methods for curing your pet. What a veterinarian will recommend will be based upon their extensive experience, education, training, and observation. Be sure to find a veterinarian experienced with treating cancer (and one who has high success rates managing this disease).

Below is a typical treatment and prevention plan.

#### **1. Eliminate Obvious Internal or External Issues**

- \* Stop use of pesticides, top spots, chemicals, etc.
- \* Stop feeding of commercial pet food and treats
- \* Eliminate daily stressors

#### **2. Detoxification: Blood and Liver Cleanse**

- \* Give antioxidants (coenzyme Q10, NAC, alpha lipoic acid, milk thistle, melatonin )
- \* Give chlorella (sun chlorella)
- \* Feed vegetables high in antioxidants (kale, broccoli, red/yellow/orange colored veggies)
- \* Feed herbs (red clover, wheat grass, alfalfa, yellow dock, red raspberry)
- \* Give herbal formulas (Essiac, Hoxey, Chinese)
- \* Increase fluid intake (vegetable juices, coconut water, meat broth, shiitake mushroom soup)
- \* Give supplements like *Antioxidant Support or Blood and Energy Endurance Formula by Resources*

#### **3. Enhance and Tonify Immune System**

- \* Acupuncture
- \* Feed medicinal mushrooms (Reishi, Maitake, Shiitake, Cordyceps, A. blasei, Coriolus)
- \* Give vitamins C, E, A, D3

- \* Give anti-cancer minerals (zinc, selenium)
- \* Give omega -3/ DHA oil from fish or krill
- \* Give CAS Options supplement by Resources

#### **4. Kill Tumor Cells / Apoptosis / Stimulate NK cells, T – lymphocytes, and macrophagic activity**

- \* Give Coenzyme Q10
- \* Apply Noni
- \* Feed medicinal mushrooms
- \* Give polyphenols
- \* Feed astragalus, turmeric, garlic
- \* Use specific Traditional Chinese herbal formulas dependent on the kind of cancer
- \* Use topicals like blood root, zinc chloride, noni, frankincense oil, antioxidant creams and lotions
- \* Give CAS Options supplement which contains medicinal mushrooms and anti-cancer antioxidants

#### **5. Prevent Spread of Cancer Cells**

- \* Avoid doing biopsies before removing tumor
- \* Feed low carb, high veggie diet with high omega -3 content
- \* Avoid stress

#### **6. Enhance and Tonify Blood**

- \* Provide blood tonic herbs and foods (organ meats)
- \* Give *Blood and Energy Endurance Formula supplement by Resources*

#### **7. Improve Deficient Organs and Dysfunctions**

- \* Give probiotics and herbs to address weak digestion and improve liver function
- \* Feed home cooked food using tailored recipes specific to your pet's needs

#### **8. Correct or Mollify the Disharmonies in the Environment**

- \* Increase exercise and fun
- \* Increase Love and Attention
- \* Decrease chemical pollution of the environment
- \* Decrease exposure to potential radiation sources

#### **This List is Extensive But ...**

This is a list of all the possibilities that relates to cancer in general, and **does not** mean all these actions, treatments, supplements and herbs will all be given at the same time.

This list represents a way of organizing the issues and using some healing modality to address the problem.

Holistic treatments alone, will improve appetite, attitude, decrease pain, will prolong life expectancy and most importantly, buy you some quality time with your beloved pet.

With progressive, serious cancers a complete cure may not be possible, but you can ensure that

your pet is as comfortable as he or she can be.

### **Summary: The 4 Step Holistic Action Plan**



Here's what I recommend.

#### **1. Detoxification (via antioxidants)**

**2. Improve Immune System Function**  
(via mushrooms, Vit E & C, Se, Astragalus)

#### **3. Kill Cancer Cells**

- \* Chemotherapy (if needed)
- \* Debulking / Surgery
- \* Injectables: Lentinen (shiitake), mistletoe
- \* Medicinal Mushrooms

#### **4. Provide Supportive Care**

- \* Nutrition
- \* Exercise
- \* Pain support
- \* Acupuncture

### **You're Not Alone In This**

Helping your pet manage cancer can be a very confusing, tedious, and emotionally-draining process. It can be difficult to know which treatments you should proceed with, or how to best support your pet through this difficult time.

### **But you don't have to navigate your options alone.**

If you need help deciding on the best treatment plan for your best friend, [I'm happy to work with you one-on-one in a phone consultation](#). During your consultation, we'll discuss your options and I'll help you come up with an action plan comprised of both holistic and conventional therapies that best support your pet's recovery.

### **About the Author**

**Dr. Basko's** mission is simple: Provide loving support and healing to pets and their families using the safest and most natural methods. He incorporates an understanding of nutrition with healing principles of Eastern medicine to create a holistic treatment program that strengthens the immune system on all levels. Dr. Basko's greatest wish is for all pet owners to enjoy more years with their furry friends, through fresh natural diets that support great health, and limited use of vaccinations and medications.



