



42TM
Rules
to Fight
Dog Cancer

2ND EDITION

Real Stories and Practical Approaches
to Dealing with Dog Cancer

AIMEE QUEMUEL

FOREWORD BY LAURIE KAPLAN




SECOND
EDITION

“42 Rules™ to Fight Dog Cancer (2nd Edition)” Book Excerpt

Real Stories and Practical
Approaches to Dealing with Dog
Cancer

By Aimee Quemuel
Foreword by Laurie Kaplan

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Foreword by Laurie Kaplan

In July 2000, I found out that my dog had cancer. I was shocked and devastated. Bullet was a strong, healthy, nine-year-old Siberian Husky and it was hard for me to believe that he had cancer. Thanks to my background as a researcher and medical animal writer, I was able to quickly gather the information I needed to formulate an attack plan. It was an all-out war, and I'm happy to say that we beat Bullet's cancer.

No matter how much information you accumulate, there is just no substitute for the sharing of stories. In this book, Aimee Quemuel has compiled wonderful canine cancer stories from people who fought (or are fighting) cancer for their dogs. Some are survival stories, some are not, but all will give you vital information and support in addition to some of the most heart-warming outpourings of love you will find anywhere. Each story illuminates one of Aimee's forty-two rules to fight dog cancer. The stories bring each rule to life by providing personal, real-life experiences in support of that rule. The rules that Aimee chose to include do a great job of covering some of the most important things to do and not to do if your dog has cancer.

A few of the stories you'll read were submitted by people who put their dogs through cancer treatment with help from the Magic Bullet Fund (MBF). As you might have guessed from the name, I founded this fund in honor of my boy Bullet. MBF provides financial assistance for people who have a dog with cancer, but cannot afford treatment costs. To date, the fund has seen eighty-six beautiful dogs through treatment that would not have had treatment without our

help. The fund subsists on donations from individuals and corporations. You can apply for help or make a donation at <http://www.themagicbulletfund.org>.

The sharing of stories is an ancient art. In *42 Rules to Fight Dog Cancer*, Aimee provides a valuable resource of canine cancer rules and stories, but she doesn't stop there. Aimee also created an oasis on the Internet where we can share and pass on to new generations of dog lovers information that will help them, educate them, and encourage them to fight dog cancer.

Aimee's web site keeps the art of storytelling alive to help people who have dogs with cancer. At <http://www.fightdogcancer.com>, you'll see many stories by people fighting canine cancer. Read them to share the writer's discoveries, experiences, thoughts, and feelings. Some stories will show you what others have done for their dogs with the same type of cancer that you're fighting, and whether it worked or not. You'll find ideas that will help you make treatment decisions, diet decisions, and choices of supplements or alternative treatments. And, while you're there, don't forget to share your story with people who will truly understand and value your commitment, determination, and emotional investment.

Thank you, Aimee, for writing and compiling *42 Rules*. The advice you offer is invaluable, and anyone who has a dog with cancer will benefit from reading these moving stories by others who have had to fight for their dogs' lives.

Laurie Kaplan
Author, *Help Your Dog Fight Cancer*,
<http://www.HelpYourdogFightCancer.com>
Founder, Magic Bullet Fund,
<http://www.TheMagicBulletFund.org>

Intro

When my Golden Retriever, Cody, was diagnosed with hemangiosarcoma, an incurable blood cancer, I was devastated. He was the one who had been there through some of most transformative years of my life—from a bright-eyed college student to a hopefully still bright-eyed, but wiser, mid-thirty-year-old woman. The thought of losing him was unbearable.

Like most, I hit the Internet to try to make sense of it all. What I found was so disheartening: statistic after statistic predicting the demise of my boy. When I tried to find survival stories to draw inspiration from, they were far and few in between to say the least. It took me countless weeks and late-night hours to gather the information I needed to put together a treatment plan—all while trying to keep strong for my boy.

Experts predict that half of all dogs will get some type of cancer in their lifetimes with 80 percent of dogs over the age of ten dying from the disease. The statistics go on and on. But the good news is that for every dog that is diagnosed with cancer, there are thousands of stories of survival yet to be told. That is how the idea of *42 Rules to Fight Dog Cancer* came into existence.

42 Rules to Fight Dog Cancer is a compilation of real stories, told by real people about their dog cancer battles—21 different contributors in all. The book does not discriminate on type of treatment used, but all authors do have one thing in common: their dogs survived significantly longer than their prognoses. Some of the dogs in this book went into complete remission; some eventually succumbed to the cancer. Collectively, the dogs in this book survived 633 months with cancer, which means we got to spend that much more time with our pups. Take,

for example, the amazing Disney (pronounced Disney), a New Jersey Beagle owned by Robin Barbosa. Disney not only beat the cancer odds and lived six and a half years after her diagnosis, but lived longer than most non-cancer dogs to the ripe old age of sixteen. The stories of survival are out there; you just need to dig a little to find them.

On a related note, I had several veterinarians and experts offer to provide their recommended treatment plans for the book, but that is not what this book is about. There are other books that provide more complete dog cancer treatment information like Laurie Kaplan's *Help Your Dog Fight Cancer*, or *The Natural Vet's Guide to Preventing and Treating Cancer in Dogs* and *Unexpected Miracles: Hope and Holistic Healing for Pets*, by Shawn Messonnier, DVM.

While there are lots of concrete tips that you can start using immediately in this book, it is not meant to be an exhaustive guideline on dog cancer treatments nor is it meant to replace the advice of your veterinarian. Rather, it is intended to provide a blend of inspirational stories and tips you can use right away in your dog cancer fight. Some authors give tips on specific treatments, others on the art of battling dog cancer. In the end, these are the recommended lessons learned from real owners who have fought or are fighting dog cancer.

An important note: **100 percent** of the author's proceeds will be donated to dog cancer nonprofits. By buying this book, you are joining us in our fight against dog cancer. We truly believe that together, with our collective knowledge, we can save our dogs.

1

Rules Are Meant to Be Broken

Aimee Quemuel

Could you imagine if no one ever broke a rule? Progress would stop altogether. But if you broke the rules every time, mayhem would ensue. Rules have to change and evolve over time, or we simply don't grow.

"Cancer is a word, not a sentence." I first heard those words in the Sumner Foundation support group for dogs with hemangiosarcoma. They have stuck with me since that very first day Cody was diagnosed.

Those words embrace the spirit of our fight against dog cancer: *rules are meant to be broken*. Could you imagine if no one ever broke a rule? Progress would stop altogether. But if you broke the rules every time, mayhem would ensue. Rules have to change and evolve over time, or we simply don't grow.

If you are like most dog owners who are battling or who have battled dog cancer, you likely received a grim prognosis. Let the contributors of this book be proof that you have to take the "rules" of prognosis with a grain of salt. It is just a guess. No one—not even your veterinarian—knows for sure how *your* dog will respond to treatment.

There are thousands of dogs who have outlived their "sentence" and the twenty-one contributors to this book are prime examples that rules can be broken, especially when it comes to the statistical aspects of dog cancer. Each of them have beat their dog cancer prognosis and lived with cancer for more than a year and, in several cases, several years. Collectively, the book's authors enjoyed 633 more months with their dogs.

In Cody's battle, I was told to euthanize him on the spot, as he would surely not live more than a few days. But as discussed in Rule 4, Don't Make Rash Decisions to Euthanize, Sherri Cooper and I cover why, in some cases, listening to your heart—not just the voice of scientific reason—is the prudent path. Luckily, I listened to my heart, and Cody lived 519 more days.

In Rule 15, Do Something, Eric Johnson talks about how he stopped the pain medications and put his dog Kita on an herbal regimen, resulting in 17 more months.

On the flip side, there are some rules that never should be broken, like in the case of Karen Summers and her dog Tensing, whose initial "unconventional" chemotherapy protocol recommended by his regular veterinarian kicked Tensing out of remission. In particular, when it comes to dosage and administration of conventional therapies such as radiation, chemotherapy, steroids, and surgery, breaking the rules is a big no-no.

As the decision maker for your dog, you have the unfortunate and fortunate position to decide when to break the rules and when to follow them. It is a balancing act for sure, and only you can decide when to bend the rules and when you must hold steadfast. It is part instinct, part knowledge of your dog, and a whole lot of education.

Speaking on behalf of the 21 contributors of this book, we wish you knowledge, strength, and insight as you start this battle. We have all been in the same position you are in. We know how it feels. But we also know that whatever this journey brings you—whether you are lucky enough to get extra time with your dog or not—the fact that you are reading this book means you are doing something to fight, and that in itself is something to be proud of.

3

Gather a Team of Cancer-Fighting Experts

Ilene Powell

You have to go beyond your regular veterinarian and amass a group of experts to help guide you in your dog cancer fight.

Diagnosed at seven years old, Labrador Retriever Mali survived hemangiosarcoma more than four years through use of an integrative approach. Mali's owner, Ilene Powell, recommends that you gather an expert cancer-fighting team beyond just your regular veterinarian.

If you are like most, you likely received the initial cancer diagnosis from your regular veterinarian. However, cancer is a very specialized disease that requires specialized care. As such, you have to go beyond your regular veterinarian and amass a group of experts to help guide you in your dog cancer fight. Your team may include specialists in veterinary surgery, oncology, holistic care, pathology, imaging, nutrition, and/or other areas, depending on your individual needs.

So, why is this important? Your veterinarian is likely great at diagnosing, but as a generalist, he or she simply does not deal with dog cancer on a day-to-day basis. And if you do decide to do surgery or chemotherapy, wouldn't you rather work with a specialist vs. a generalist?

For example, veterinarian oncology is a specialized field of veterinary medicine. They have focused training on animals with cancer. Depending on your needs, the oncologist can oversee your dog's treatment, or he or she can assist your general practice veterinarian by sharing knowledge and techniques, or even

participating as needed in surgeries and chemotherapy. An oncologist will be current on the best conventional treatments available, and will have firsthand experience treating hundreds of animals that have been diagnosed with cancer. Chemotherapy, immunotherapy, radiation therapy, and photodynamic therapy are each possible conventional treatments for your dog's cancer, and each method has pros and cons. A knowledgeable oncologist should be able to explain the details of each method.

When I decided on chemotherapy as part of Mali's regimen, I knew I had to consult with an oncologist. I was lucky in that my regular veterinarian flew in an oncologist for weekly treatments of his cancer patients. However, if there is not a local oncologist available in your area, an alternative is to have your regular veterinarian work with an oncologist remotely. There are several resources to help you find a remote oncologist such as Veterinary Oncology Consultants, <http://www.vetoncologyconsults.com/>.

Should you wish to add supplements such as vitamins and herbs, enhanced nutrition, and/or acupuncture to your dog's cancer arsenal, holistic veterinarians are well versed in these modalities. While I did not work with a holistic veterinarian, the oncologist we worked with had both Western and Eastern medical experience, so I had the added benefit of his expertise in this arena as well. He would regularly review my supplement list to ensure that they did not interfere with any of the conventional treatments we were using. While we wanted to do everything for her, everything may not have been right for Mali.

Once you gather the members of your team, try to build a personal relationship with them, with the goal of building a responsive, cancer-fighting team that rallies behind you. I brought my team food and sent them cards and pictures. I did the little things that made sure Mali and I were remembered. Keep in mind that your team is busy and you need to respect their time with other patients. Ask them how long it takes them to get back to you, and try to get their email addresses. Often, email is a better way for them to respond, especially after hours. And if you don't get a timely answer, keep following up, but again, be respectful.

5

Seek Open-Minded Veterinarians

Aimee Quemuel

Especially if you are not given any treatment options, seek open-minded veterinarians who are willing to explore safe options that just might help get you more time with your beloved dog.

Especially if you are not given any treatment options, seek open-minded veterinarians who are willing to explore safe options that just might help get you more time with your beloved dog. After getting seven "second opinions," it was easy to spot the veterinarians with open minds. They tended to have had the most recent schooling and access to the latest cutting edge technologies to cure dog cancer. When I brought up a treatment I read about, they would say something like, "Well, I have not heard of that, but based on the ingredients, it wouldn't do any harm, so it should be safe to at least try."

On the flip side, the "closed-minded" veterinarians I consulted with did not offer treatment plans beyond tramadol, a narcotic for relieving pain. While I understand that all the statistics said that Cody's cancer was considered incurable, it started to become apparent that some veterinarians are so by the book, and would default to what they knew best: the grim statistics. I even recall asking one of them about new anti-angiogenesis protocols for fighting cancer; she had no idea what I was talking about, and then proceeded to talk about how the cancer was incurable.

Five out of the seven veterinarians I consulted with all recommended that I euthanize Cody as he wouldn't last more than a few weeks. One even recommended that I keep his IV/PIC line, as she was positive I would be returning to euthanize him in a few days.

However, two veterinarians encouraged me to at least try. While they both still warned me of the grim statistics, they both helped me put together a treatment plan that put Cody into remission and gave me 17 more months with him.

Dr. Cadile from San Mateo Veterinary Medical Specialists, <http://www.vmsmedicine.com/doctors.htm>, was still in the process of doing her oncology medical residency program when I came to her. Not only was she full of piss and vinegar, she also was involved in cutting-edge studies on anti-angiogenic therapy for curing hemangiosarcoma. Dr. Cadile prescribed Cody a new anti-angiogenesis program. While Dr. Cadile warned that she did not think it would help, she said it would not hurt to try. I believe it helped two out of the three tumors go into remission—as they were eventually undetectable via ultrasound.

The other was Dr. Molly Rice, of Coastal Holistic, <http://www.coastalholistic.com/doctors.html>. I brought Cody to her within the first few weeks of his diagnosis and she immediately began acupuncture treatment. She also recommended a few Chinese herbs to help him in his cancer battle. Again, she warned me of the grim statistics, but she helped me do something. That something translated into a cancer miracle story.

This is not to say that veterinarians who go only "by the books" can't help you, in fact, when it came to Cody's surgery to remove his spleen, I went with a veterinarian that had been doing surgery for 20+ years "by the book," as this was a time that I felt this kind of experience was critical. I just think that adding a few open-minded veterinarians will help round out your team. They provide a fresh perspective and are often the ones that have recently been in school, so they have been exposed to experiential treatment plans that might not have been passed on to "by the book" veterinarians yet.

9

The Power of Positivity

Jeanne Arsenault

We all know the effects of positive energy and, despite the lack of scientific data to back it, even the most skeptical people turn to some sort of spiritual-based thinking in times of need.

At ten and a half years old, Jeanne Arsenault's Golden Retriever/Cocker Spaniel mix Bailey was diagnosed with prostate cancer and given three to four months to live with no treatment and ten months with chemo. Bailey survived twenty-one months after his initial diagnosis, with no conventional treatment, and died of natural causes. A completely natural approach that included healing sessions, a natural diet, and herbs was used in this success story. No chemo or surgery.

Just months after I lost my father to the dreaded disease, my beloved Bailey was diagnosed with prostate cancer. The doctors advised me that my Bailey had only three to four months to live, but with chemo we might be able to extend his life by six more months.

For months prior to his diagnosis, I saw my father battle this disease and watched helplessly as it took its effect on his body and spirit; a scenario I didn't want to see repeated with Bailey. As the voice for Bailey, I had the unfortunate and fortunate position of having to make all of his decisions. He couldn't verbally tell me what he wanted, but I knew my old dog would never survive chemo and, above all, I didn't want to see him suffer.

Since I am a strong believer in holistic remedies (unfortunately, my father did not share my beliefs), I went online and studied alternative remedies to cancer. In addition to changing his diet and adding herbs/supplements to his

regiment, I began what I referred to as "healing sessions" with Bailey. We all know the effects of positive energy and, despite the lack of scientific data to back it, even the most skeptical people turn to some sort of spiritual-based thinking in times of need.

I would begin by putting on soft, meditative music. I would then place my hands on his body, particularly in the areas of his heart, lungs, and prostate. I would breathe deeply into my body, and then I would envision positive energy flowing from me to him. I would imagine the blood running freely through his veins, into his heart and lungs, and I would picture all the organs in his body functioning properly.

I would envision the tumor in his prostate shrinking until there was nothing of it left in his body. As I would perform this ritual, I would begin to feel the energy running down my arms, out of my fingertips and into his body, like a flow of electricity. As I would feel the sensation, I always knew when it would reach his body, as he would jolt just slightly and then he would lift his head and look directly at me. This happened each time, without exception. I would perform these sessions at least once a week, sometimes more often if he was feeling particularly low on energy. After these sessions, he would be more alert and lively, often acting like a young dog again.

I am convinced that his new diet and the healing sessions are the reason that twenty-one months after Bailey was given four months to live, he was diagnosed cancer-free and able to live his life to the ripe old age of nearly thirteen—the equivalent to roughly ninety-one human years.

About the Author



Aimee Quemuel is the author of *42 Rules to Fight Dog Cancer*. An avid animal advocate, having volunteered at the San Francisco SPCA, Pet's Unlimited, and the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation, Aimee is the "mamma" of two Golden Retrievers, beloved Cody and current dog CJ (shown in picture above), and founder of FightDogCancer.com, a site dedicated to helping dog owners fight dog cancer through the collective knowledge of dog owners throughout the world.

Aimee's journey began on November 5, 2006, when her beloved Cody collapsed after a day at the beach in San Francisco. He was rushed to the emergency veterinarian, where he was diagnosed with an incurable cancer, hemangiosarcoma. With tumors in his liver, spleen, and heart, Cody was given the grim

prognosis of just a few weeks to live. Aimee was devastated, but could not let Cody go without a fight. After extensive research, her first step was to change his diet.

Unable to find freshly prepared, organic food critical to Cody's fight against cancer, Aimee started making Cody a "cancer-fighting" diet along with an arsenal of herbs and supplements. Cody thrived on his new diet and, long story short, survived seventeen months post his diagnosis to the age of twelve and a half years old. His veterinarians were amazed and coined him a miracle dog. Nearly two years after his death, Aimee decided to combine her life-changing experience with her career as a writer and marketing professional to write *42 Rules to Fight Dog Cancer*.

Getting “42 Rules to Fight Dog Cancer (2nd Edition)”
(<http://www.happyabout.com/42rules/fightdogcancer.php>)

42 Rules to Fight Dog Cancer (2nd Edition) can be purchased as an eBook for \$14.95 or tradebook for \$19.95 at:
<http://www.happyabout.com/42rules/fightdogcancer.php> or at other online and physical book stores.

Please contact us for quantity discounts sales@happyabout.info or to be informed about upcoming titles bookupdate@happyabout.info or phone (408-257-3000).

"The 42 Rules to Fight Dog Cancer is all about the HERO's journey we are invited to walk when our dog has been given a cancer diagnosis. As you will discover the 'Rules' are really about learning to navigate this journey in a way that honors ourselves, our dog and the special bond we share."

Liz Fernandez, DVM, Acupuncture for Pets

"This book is a must read for anyone facing the dreaded diagnosis of cancer for his or her pet. Following the information in this book will give your pet the best chance of fighting this horrible disease."

Shawn Messonnier DVM and award-winning author of 'The Natural Vet's Guide to Preventing and Treating Cancer in Dogs'

"I am impressed with the concise approach the book offers on not only DEALING with a dog who has cancer, but also methods and steps on how to AVOID the possibility of contracting a cancerous disease."

Mark Siebel, Owner – Lead Trainer/Behaviorist at DOGGIE STEPS Dog Training, LLC.



AIMEE QUEMUEL

is an avid animal advocate and creator of FightDogCancer.com, a free service that uses the latest technology to not only help dog owners in their ordeal with cancer, but to also raise money for dog cancer charities. A true believer in giving back, all author proceeds from the 42 Rules to Fight Dog Cancer will be donated to dog charities.

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