List of Unproven or discredited Cancer Treatments

This is a list of alternative treatments that have been promoted to treat or prevent cancer in humans but which lack good scientific and medical evidence of effectiveness. In many cases, there is good scientific evidence that the alleged treatments do not work. Unlike accepted cancer treatments, unproven and disproven treatments are generally ignored or avoided by the medical community, and are often pseudoscientific.

There are numerous other ‘treatments’ that are too ridiculous to include here.

Diet-based

Alkaline diet – a restrictive diet of non-acid foods, such as that proposed by Edgar Cayce (1877–1945), based on the claim this will affect the pH of the body generally, so reducing the risk of heart disease and cancer. According to the Canadian Cancer Society, "there is no evidence to support any of these claims."

Breuss diet – a diet based on vegetable juice and tea devised by Rudolf Breuss (1899–1990), who claimed it could cure cancer. Physicians have said that, in common with other "cancer diets", there is no evidence of effectiveness and some risk of harm.

Budwig diet – an anti-cancer diet developed in the 1950s by Johanna Budwig (1908–2003). The diet is rich in flaxseed oil mixed with cottage cheese, and emphasizes meals high in fruits, vegetables, and fiber; it avoids sugar, animal fats, salad oil, meats, butter, and especially margarine. Cancer Research UK say, "there is no reliable evidence to show that the Budwig diet [...] helps people with cancer".

Fasting – not eating or drinking for a period – a practice which has been claimed by some alternative medicine practitioners to help fight cancer, perhaps by "starving" tumors. However, according to the American Cancer Society, "available scientific evidence does not support claims that fasting is effective for preventing or treating cancer in humans".

Hallelujah diet – a restrictive "biblical" diet based on raw food, claimed by its inventor to have cured his cancer. Stephen Barrett has written on Quackwatch: "Although low-fat, high-fiber diets can be healthful, the Hallelujah Diet is unbalanced and can lead to serious deficiencies."

Kousmine diet – a restrictive diet devised by Catherine Kousmine (1904–1992) which emphasized fruit, vegetables, grains, pulses and the use of vitamin supplements. There is no evidence that the diet is an effective cancer treatment.

Macrobiotic diet – a restrictive diet based on grains and unrefined foods, and promoted by some as a preventative and cure for cancer. Cancer Research UK states "we don't support the use of macrobiotic diets for people with cancer".
Moerman Therapy – a highly restrictive diet devised by Cornelis Moerman (1893–1988). Its effectiveness is supported by anecdote only – there is no evidence of its worth as a cancer treatment.

Superfood – a marketing term applied to certain foods with supposed health-giving properties. Cancer Research UK note that superfoods are often promoted as having an ability to prevent or cure diseases, including cancer; they caution, "you shouldn't rely on so-called 'superfoods' to reduce the risk of cancer. They cannot substitute for a generally healthy and balanced diet". ('Superfoods' and cancer'. Cancer Research UK. August 2013)

Electromagnetic and energy-based

Bioresonance therapy – diagnosis and therapy delivered by attaching an electrical device to the patient, on the basis that cancer cells emit certain electromagnetic oscillations. The Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center says that such claims are not supported by any evidence and note that the US Food and Drug Administration has prosecuted many sellers of such devices.

Electrohomeopathy (or Mattei cancer cure) – a treatment devised by Count Cesare Mattei (1809–1896), who proposed that different "colors" of electricity could be used to treat cancer. Popular in the late nineteenth century, electrohomeopathy has been described as "utter idiocy".

Electro Physiological Feedback Xrroid – an electronic device promoted as being capable of diagnosing and treating cancer and a host of other ailments. However, according to Quackwatch: "The Quantum Xrroid device is claimed to balance 'bio-energetic' forces that the scientific community does not recognize as real. It mainly reflects skin resistance (how easily low-voltage electric currents from the device pass through the skin), which is not related to the body's health."

Light therapy – the use of light to treat medical conditions. According to the American Cancer Society, alternative approaches – such as chromotherapy or the use of light boxes – have not been shown to be effective for cancer treatment.

Magnetic therapy – the practice of placing magnets on and around the body in order to treat illness. Although this has been promoted as a treatment for cancer and other diseases, the American Cancer Society say, "available scientific evidence does not support these claims".

Polarity therapy – a type of energy medicine based on the idea that the positive or negative charge of a person's electromagnetic field affects their health. Although it is promoted as effective for curing a number of human ailments, including cancer, the American Cancer Society says "available scientific evidence does not support claims that polarity therapy is effective in treating cancer or any other disease".

Rife Frequency Generator – an electronic device purported to cure cancer by transmitting radio waves. Cancer Research UK state, "there is no evidence to show that the Rife machine does what its supporters say it does".

Physical procedures
**Chiropractic** – the practice of manipulating the spine to treat many human ailments. According to the American Cancer Society, "available scientific evidence does not support claims that chiropractic treatment cures cancer or any other life-threatening illness".

**Colon cleansing** – the practice of cleansing the colon using laxatives and enemas to "detoxify" the body. Coffee enemas in particular are promoted as a cancer therapy. According to the American Cancer Society, "available scientific evidence does not support claims that colon therapy is effective in treating cancer or any other disease".

**Dance therapy** – the use of dance or physical movement to improve physical or mental well-being. The American Cancer Society states, "Few scientific studies have been done to evaluate the effects of dance therapy on health, prevention, and recovery from illness. Clinical reports suggest dance therapy may be effective in improving self-esteem and reducing stress. As a form of exercise, dance therapy can be useful for both physical and emotional aspects of quality of life." A Cochrane review found too few studies to draw any conclusions about what effects dance therapy has on psychological or physical outcomes in cancer patients.

**Reiki** – a procedure in which the practitioner might look at, blow on, tap and touch a patient in an attempt to affect the "energy" in their body. Although there is some evidence that reiki sessions are relaxing and so might improve general well-being, Cancer Research UK say that "there is no scientific evidence to prove that Reiki can prevent, treat or cure cancer or any other disease".

**Shiatsu** – a type of alternative medicine consisting of finger and palm pressure, stretches, and other massage techniques. According to Cancer Research UK, "there is no scientific evidence to prove that shiatsu can cure or prevent any type of disease, including cancer."

**Synthetic chemicals and other substances**

**714-X** – sometimes called "trimethylbicyclonitramineoheptane chloride", is a mixture of chemicals marketed commercially as a cure for many human ailments, including cancer. There is however no scientific evidence for any anti-cancer effect from 714-X.

**Antineoplaston therapy** – a form of chemotherapy promoted by the Burzynski Clinic in Texas, United States. The American Cancer Society has found no evidence that antineoplastons have any beneficial effects in cancer, and it has recommended that people do not spend money on antineoplaston treatments.

**Apitherapy** – the use of products derived from bees, such as honey and bee venom, as a therapy. Apitherapy has been promoted for its anti-cancer effects; however according to the American Cancer Society, "there have been no clinical studies in humans showing that bee venom or other honeybee products are effective in preventing or treating cancer."

**Cancer Cell Treatment** – a patented cream-based formula. Per their own page The CC Formula has not been approved by the FDA. Claims to disrupt the Krebs cycle.

**Cancell** (also called Protocol, Sheridan's Formula, Jim's Juice, Crocinic Acid, JS–114, JS–101, 126–F, and Entelev) – a formula that has been promoted as a treatment for a wide range of diseases, including cancer. The American Cancer Society and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
recommend against the use of CanCell, as there is no evidence that it is effective in treating any disease, and its proposed method of action is not consistent with modern science.

**Cell therapy** – the practice of injecting cellular material from animals in an attempt to prevent or treat cancer. Although the use of human-to-human cell therapy has some established medical uses, the injection of animal material is, according to the American Cancer Society, not backed by any evidence of effectiveness, and "may in fact be lethal".

**Cytokine therapy** (or Klehr’s autologous tumor therapy) – a so-called immunotherapy with a therapeutic substrate made of cytokines from the cancer patients' blood. The inventor of this method is Nikolaus Walther Klehr, a dermatologist, who practiced it in his private clinics in Salzburg and Munich. The patients were mainly from Slovenia, Poland and other Eastern European countries. Klehr is reported as claiming that his treatment leads to extended lifespan. According to German Cancer Aid, the mechanism of action is unclear and the method's clinical effectiveness unproven.

**Coral calcium** – a dietary supplement supposedly made from crushed coral and promoted with claims it could treat a number of diseases including cancer. A consumer advisory issued by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine stated "Consumers should be aware that claims that coral calcium can treat or cure cancer, multiple sclerosis, lupus, heart disease, or high blood pressure are not supported by existing scientific evidence".

**Di Bella Therapy** – a cocktail of vitamins, drugs and hormones devised by Luigi di Bella (1912–2003) and promoted as a cancer treatment. According to the American Cancer Society: "Available scientific evidence does not support claims that Di Bella therapy is effective in treating cancer. It can cause serious and harmful side effects. ... [These] may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, increased blood sugar levels, low blood pressure, sleepiness, and neurological symptoms."

**Dimethyl sulfoxide (or DMSO)** – an organosulfur compound that has been promoted as a treatment for cancer since the 1960s. According to the American Cancer Society, "available scientific evidence does not suggest that DMSO is effective in treating cancer in humans".

**Gc-MAF** (Gc protein-derived macrophage activating factor) – a type of protein that affects the immune system, and which has been promoted as a "miracle cure" for cancer and HIV. According to Cancer Research UK, "there is no solid scientific evidence to show that the treatment is safe or effective".

**Hydrazine sulfate** – a chemical compound promoted (sometimes as "rocket fuel treatment") for its supposed ability to treat cancer. According to Cancer Research UK, although there is some evidence Hydrazine sulfate might help some people with cancer gain weight, "there is no evidence that it helps to treat cancer".

**Insulin potentiation therapy** – the practice of injecting insulin, usually alongside a low dose of conventional chemotherapy drugs, in the belief that this improves the overall effect of the treatment. Although it may cause a temporary reduction in tumor size for some patients, there is no evidence that it improves survival time or any other main outcomes.
**Krebiozen** (also known as Carcalon, creatine, substance X, or drug X) – a mineral oil-based liquid sold as an alternative cancer treatment. According to the American Cancer Society: "Available scientific evidence does not support claims that Krebiozen is effective in treating cancer or any other disease. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), creatine has been linked to several dangerous side effects."

**Orthomolecular medicine** (or Megavitamin therapy) – the use of high doses of vitamins, claimed by proponents to help cure cancer. The view of the medical community is that there is no evidence that these therapies are effective for treating any disease.

**Revici's Guided Chemotherapy** – a practice in which a chemical mixture (usually including lipid alcohol and various metals) is given by mouth or injection, supposedly to cure cancer. The practice was devised by Emanuel Revici (1896–1997) and differs from modern chemotherapy despite being named with the same term. According to the American Cancer Society: "Available scientific evidence does not support claims that Revici's guided chemotherapy is effective in treating cancer or any other disease. It may also cause potentially serious side effects."

**Vitacor** – a type of vitamin supplement devised by Matthias Rath and heavily promoted on the internet, alongside other products from Rath's company under the "Cellular Health" brand, as a claimed treatment for cancer and other human disease; these claims have led to Rath's prosecution.[148] According to Cancer Research UK, "there is no scientific evidence at all to back up the claims that these products work".