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Gesundheit! Nutrition Center

Angelina Angst

CANCER CURSE, CURE, OR CONFUSION?

When world-famous actress Angelina Jolie announced that she had undergone a double mastectomy followed by reconstructive surgery, the responses indicated she had just opened up a can of worms. The *media* responded with surprise, confusion, and sympathetic drama. *Critics* were scratching their heads questioning both her motive and her reason for going public, since this treatment option had been around for decades. And the *public* expressed renewed concern about the prevalence of breast cancer, and the possibility of whether a cure would ever be found.

Anytime someone has to get ready for invasive surgery, stress increases, and the realization arises that complications are real, and that life may never be the same after the procedure. I am sure that Miss Jolie realized that this could be the case for her as well and that, as she stated after the fact, it was a very hard and personal decision.

BOSOM BUDDIES

It doesn't matter that she has the resources to get the best treatment in the world; her experience was very invasive and painful. Many women have had this procedure done, and many have been scarred or disfigured for life. And don't forget the time it takes the body to recover, which can be longer or shorter, depending on the quality of the surgery, the severity of the diseased tissue, as well as a patient's physical condition and attitude.

According to resources,[1] Angelina Jolie, 37, went back to work on a movie she is directing four days after her double mastectomy in February. Her surgeon, Dr. Kristi Funk, reported that, when she visited Jolie after the procedure, she was busy at work, upbeat, and had bountiful energy. Six drains dangled from her chest, three on each side, fastened to an elastic belt around her waist.

Both women knew by now that the surgery was successful and that all breast tissue was benign. By the time Jolie shared her ordeal with the world she had already gone through reconstructive surgery as well, ten weeks after the double mastectomy.

WHY WORRY?

Miss Jolie, by her own free choice, decided to go the western medical route for treatment. This happened after she received information—probably from a genetic counselor and her physician—that she carried a mutation of *BRCA1*, a breast cancer-specific gene, in her body. This mutation gave her an increased chance for developing breast cancer and ovarian cancer compared to the average person. And since this gene was also found in her mother, who died of breast cancer in 2007 at age 56, and her aunt who died of ovarian cancer, Jolie considered this series of surgeries *preventative* steps to avoid problems later.

Not being a woman, I wonder if removing breasts is the best

A SECOND OPINION: Could the recent mass-market coverage of Angelina Jolie's double mastectomy be leading women to unnecessary surgeries?

preemptive measure for anybody to avoid breast cancer? Should those people who have an increased risk of liver, pancreatic, brain, or skin cancer have those organs removed as well in order to avoid heartbreak later? And for that matter, should I have my ***heart*** removed, since nine people on my father's side of the family died of heart attacks, at ages 29, 34, 41, 45, 52 (my dad), 56, 63, 64, and 70? At 53, I am obviously right in the mix!

How creatively twisted can the human mind be? With every medical innovation, with every healing miracle, with every courageous story of survival, and with an ever-growing arsenal of natural treatment options, why do our *minds* express an ever-growing doubt in the power of the human *spirit* or

in the righteousness of life's unfolding?

We're all on the clock. Luckily we don't have a crystal ball giving us a specific end-date, or cause of death for that matter; but somehow, starting even before the celebration of birth, we are fighting to survive at all cost.

However, life comes with the responsibility of making choices. Challenges we face and options presented range from protecting what is bestowed upon us, to improving our conditions, and to helping others who have fallen on hard times. How we make our choices makes us unique as human beings.

The fields of sciences, medicine and healing have inspired people to improve life, even though it got to where it is today through often costly trial and error. In this high-tech, information-overloaded world, it surprises me that, as far as breast cancer is concerned, mammograms and mastectomies are still considered prevalent and preventive choices.

> Too many people have died of cancer, and breast cancer in particular, following allopathic medicine's regime of mammograms, cutting, burning and poisoning. These are not ***health*** options; they are decades old, underachieving ***treatment*** options!

GENE GENIE

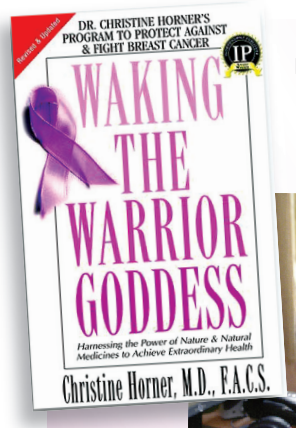
These *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* genes Angelina brought to daylight, play a special role inside our cells. Both are tumor suppressor genes producing proteins that make very precise, perfectly matched repairs to DNA once they have double-stranded breaks.[2] When both strands are broken, it is difficult for the repair mechanism to "know" how to replace the correct DNA sequence, and there are multiple ways to attempt the repair.[3] Usually this involves proteins produced by other genes as well. However, harmful mutations in any of these genes not only disable that gene but also the protein it produces.

The cancer risk caused by *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* mutations can be inherited from either parent, which is classified as *hereditary* or *germ line* mutations (see illustration).

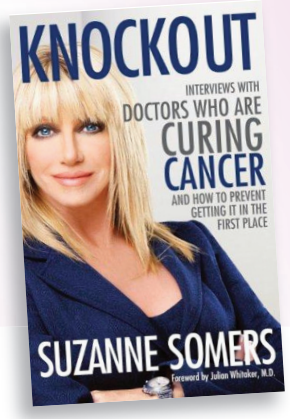
Human cells have two copies of the BRCA gene (one from each biological parent). Typically only one copy contains a disabling, inherited mutation. If the functional copy is harmed, then the cell is forced to use alternate DNA repair mechanisms, which are more error-prone. Any resulting errors in DNA repair may result in cell death or a cancerous transformation of the cell.

Some variants in *BRCA* genes are harmless; others are known to be very harmful. Researchers have identified hundreds of mutations of the *BRCA1* gene that can lead to an increased risk for breast cancer as part of a hereditary breast-ovarian cancer syndrome, as is the case with Angelina Jolie. Women with an abnormal *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* gene have up to an 80% risk of developing breast cancer by age 90; increased risk of developing ovarian cancer is about 55% for women with *BRCA1* mutations and about 25% for women with *BRCA2* mutations.

Different factors may cause DNA strands damage and disruption to the BRCA genes, but radiation is one of them. According to Joseph Mercola, D.O., in an article published on May 27: "Ironically, if you discover that you carry the mutated *BRCA* gene, the standard recommendations in the US is to get a mammogram and an MRI scan at least once a year thereafter, even if you are under the age of 40. However, if you have a genetic susceptibility for breast cancer, it would be wise to avoid ionizing radiation as much as possible!



Dr. Christine Horner, MD, FACS, has been at the forefront of breast-health issues for 10 years. She pioneered the 1998 insurance law to pay for post-mastectomy reconstructive surgery. She is the author of ***"Waking the Warrior Goddess: Dr. Horner's Program to Protect Against and Fight Breast Cancer"*** and has appeared on Oprah's Angel Network and Dr. Oz, to name a few. She recently completed a tour of Montana cities and spoke on this author's radio talk show.



Suzanne Somers—*"KNOCKOUT: Interviews with Doctors Wh Are Curing Cancer, and How to Prevent Getting It in the First Place"* After her own cancer, Susanne shares her personal alternative choices and outlines an array of options from doctors around the country.

Research published in the *British Medical Journal* (2012) has demonstrated that women with these genetic mutations are more sensitive to radiation, and because these genes in question are involved in repairing DNA, radiation damage to these genes will subsequently raise your cancer risk (i.e., exposure to X-rays before age 20 raises the risk by 62%, and when in their 20's there is a 43% increased relative risk of breast cancer)."[4]

LEMMINGS' LEAP

Miss Jolie is keenly aware of the power of media. By her telling her story in the *New York Times* on May 14th, she knew it would reach many millions. And though she insists that this was the decision she made for *her*-self, she wished for *Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof to pass on that, besides her gratitude for the outpouring of public support, *"She wants to use her medical issues to nurture a national conversation on health options. No self-pity; she just wants to help."*

But what does that help mean? And what different health options is she aware of and does she promote? Should others with a *BRCA1* gene mutation follow her example? Will her personal choice of double mastectomy and reconstructive surgery inspire millions of women to make this a trend?

Angelina Jolie chose to shoot *first*, then aim. For these types of decisions, you should aim first (i.e., look at ALL your options, pick the right one), then shoot (go for it).

In my opinion, breast cancer has become the poster child of all cancers, and it has ignited a powerful, greedy, misleading industry of research and controversial treatments that has no intention of showing all its cards. Obviously, there are many who have benefitted from its research and therapies, but the cost-to-success ratio is too small to pound the chest.

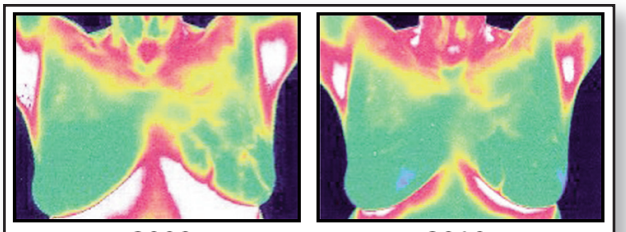
Too many people have died of cancer, and breast cancer in particular, following allopathic medicine's regime of mammograms, cutting, burning and poisoning. These are not ***health*** options; they are decades old, underachieving ***treatment*** options! When do we—like so many before us—stop jumping off the cliff into the arms of self-serving health professionals, and start demanding from these so-called (breast) cancer authorities to ***show us a cure or get out of our way so we can find our own!***

PRACTICE PERSEVERANCE

Getting a cancer diagnosis, or, as in the case of Angelina Jolie, discovering that you have an increased chance of obtaining cancer of the breasts or ovaries, can be like a heavy dark cloud hanging over you. You will have to come up with an action plan: re-active or pro-active.

Those who have dedicated their lives to chronic disease prevention, making healthy choices for weeks, months, years and decades, feel empowered and independent. Others have chosen a better diet and healthier lifestyle once they were confronted with personal challenges or a devastating diagnosis. For example: many have healed from cancer using specific restrictive diets, others by taking high doses of concentrated dietary supplements. I know folks who found healing from cancer at any stage using coffee enemas,

Jacobus is not a doctor and does not intend to diagnose, treat or cure any disorder. The information is based on self-study, interviewing experts on his weekly 3-hour Saturday morning Radio Program *"Gesundheit! With Jacobus,"* which runs from 8–11 am, on AM 1450-KMMS and AM 1340 KPRK, and on feedback received from retail customers visiting his dietary supplements retail store Gesundheit! Nutrition Center at 2855 N. 19th Avenue, Suite N, in Bozeman. Call 585-4668. If in doubt please visit a professional of your own choice and/or educate yourself with available published materials.



2009 2010

Breast therogrpahy showing lump disappearance.

infrared sauna therapy, poultices, intravenous vitamin-C treatments, 35% food-grade hydrogen peroxide, as well as meditation, visualization, and prayer. These options were much more affordable, and didn't bring them or their family to financial ruin.

A small percentage has died from going the alternative route. But they have shared with their last breath that they felt they kept their dignity and lived life to the fullest without the horrible side effects often experienced by those using conventional treatments.

In her book, ***Knockout***, **Suzanne Somers** interviews doctors from across the country who are successfully using the most innovative cancer treatments—treatments that build up the body rather than tear it down. Somers herself has stared cancer in the face. On the Dr. Oz Show she also shared her personal choices, including her breast reconstructive surgery after she had a massive lumpectomy that removed two-thirds of her right breast eleven years ago. She opted to use her own belly fat mixed with stem cells to be injected into the breast to recreate fullness and symmetry.[5]

Miss Somers also indicated fresh organic food choices, high doses of antioxidants, mistletoe extract, the use of bio-identical hormones, and staying fit as contributing factors to her regained excellent health.

Christine Horner, MD, in her book, *Waking the Warrior Goddess*, outlines ways to keep breast tissue healthy and how to prevent or fight (breast) cancer once you have it. Her training and career as a board-certified plastic surgeon, her studies in Ayurveda, and her research into the misnomers in cancer diagnostics, combined with her training into all-natural choices for breast health, have made her a well-versed resource for anybody confronted with cancer. Dr. Horner is also very down-to-earth, hands-on, personable, and humble. She walks the walk.

So many paths to better health can be walked; so many more books have been written, lectures given, and healing has been experienced. But it all starts with a single step: making a choice to become the best educated person you can be in knowing your body; nobody else will do it for you.

KNOW there is **hope**! Follow your instincts, and then trust your choices. Angelina Jolie's made a firm choice, though it seemed premature to me because the removed breast tissue was healthy, and research has shown that only TWO PERCENT of diagnosed breast cancers are caused by *BRCA* faults. Don't let *angst* become your guide; get to work on yourself instead— ***non-genetic factors play a far-more significant role!*** ■

NOTES:

1. http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/angelina-jolie-double-mastectomy-surgeon-reveals-actress-went-back-to-work-four-days-after-operation-to-escape-breast-cancer-8617554.html
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BRCA_mutation
3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BRCA1
4. http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2013/05/27/angelina-jolie-double-mastectomy.aspx
5. http://www.doctoroz.com/videos/suzanne-somers-cancer-battle-pt-3

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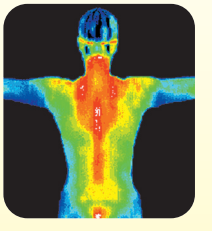

HOW IT WORKS: Thermography is done with an infrared camera that detects sensitive temperature differences in the body. Any abnormality can indicate developing pathology, including breast disease at an early stage, leading to earlier diagnosis, with better treatment options.

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