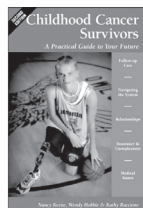


## B O O K S

**Childhood Cancer Survivors: A Practical Guide to Your Future (2nd ed).** Nancy Keene, Wendy Hobbie\*, and Kathy Rucione\*. Sepastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media, Inc., 2006, 436 pages, \$27.95.

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When families hear the words, "I am sorry. Your child has cancer," they are thrust into the often frightening and confusing world of health care, where they must navigate through treatment options and make decisions concerning the life of their child. Their focus turns to the present, achievement of remission, and, hopefully, a cure. The long-term issues that pediatric cancer survivors must face often are not addressed during treatment because the goal is to keep the child alive. However, with today's improved pediatric cancer survival statistics, most children survive their cancers and grow to be adults, only to face a whole host of new issues and problems. Survivors of childhood cancer need tools to handle survivorship issues, but where do they find them? *Childhood Cancer Survivors: A Practical Guide to Your Future* is one of a series of patient-centered guides written to provide parents with information and practical advice to care for children with cancer. The book provides a comprehensive and thorough account of issues that pediatric cancer survivors and their families will face. Although other print and Internet resources are available for survivors and families, this book is a valuable resource because of its dual focus on pediatric cancer survivors and the issues pertinent to them.

\*Oncology Nursing Society member

The book is divided into 20 chapters; each chapter is well written and easy for the lay person to read. The early chapters concentrate on psychosocial issues, relationships, navigating the system, staying healthy, fatigue, and emotions. In addition, the authors are not afraid to cover sensitive topics, such as sexuality and fertility. The latter section of the book focuses on body systems and discusses the potential effects that certain treatments, if received, might have on the organs in each system. The authors are careful to emphasize that not all patients will experience every problem covered in the book, if any; however, if families fail to note or understand this, they may find the chapters a bit overwhelming.

Most of the chapters include comments of survivors and parents regarding their experiences, which gives the book a more personal feel but also can be distracting. The powerful impact of hearing the voices of people who have gone through pediatric cancer, however, far outweighs this minor detail. The comments are pertinent, and positive and negative accounts of survivors and their families are portrayed in an honest narrative.

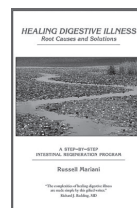
The appendices in the book provide valuable information about resources available to pediatric cancer survivors and their families. Resources mentioned include a Web site to find a survivors' clinic, organizations for pediatric cancer survivors that provide services and information, books, and other Internet sites. Because the book is in its second edition, resources have been updated. The Cancer Survivor's Treatment Record pullout insert at the end of the book is a very useful resource. So many pediatric cancer survivors are unaware of the treatments they receive, let alone specific medications and dosage amounts. With more children surviving cancer every day, long-term follow-up of their health issues has become imperative. The insert provides survivors and healthcare providers with the tools to anticipate and deal with any health problems encountered years after treatment is completed.

*Childhood Cancer Survivors: A Practical Guide to Your Future* allows pediatric cancer survivors to take ownership of their disease and gives them the tools to deal with the long-term sequelae (physical and emotional) they might face later in life. The book can serve as a conduit for healthcare providers, survivors, and their families to talk about the issues unique to this patient population.

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**Healing Digestive Illness: Root Causes and Solutions.** Russell Mariani. South Hadley, MA: Maramor Press, 2006, 317 pages, \$24.95

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According to the author, the purpose of *Healing Digestive Illness: Root Causes and Solutions* is to support individuals as they make an important investment in their health and healing journey. The book provides step-by-step actions to teach people how to make changes to their digestive systems to heal from digestive system problems and achieve an overall healing of the entire body. The author strongly encourages conventional medicine and care in conjunction with his methods of digestive healing, referred to as functional nutrition, and insists that people include their physicians and caregivers in the process.

Functional nutrition refers to dietary and lifestyle habits that, when applied consistently, have the ability to restore normal function of the digestive system. Mariani's invitation to improve personal digestive healing is extended to any and all individuals dealing with digestive system problems. Mariani has dedicated himself to the continuous learning and teaching of nutrition and health. He began the Center for Functional Nutrition in 1999, in the Pioneer Valley of western Massachusetts.

Section one of the book prepares readers to heal themselves, armed with basic knowledge of digestive system problems. Stories from clients and their journeys to healing are included. Section two provides detailed directions and supports to accomplish major

Ease of Reference and Usability	Content Level	Media Size
🕒 Quick, on-the-spot resource	✓ Basic	📖 Pocket size
🕒🕒 Moderate time requirement	✓ ✓ Intermediate	📖📖 Intermediate
🕒🕒🕒 In-depth study	✓ ✓ ✓ Advanced and complex, prerequisite reading required	📖📖📖 Desk reference

Digital Object Identifier: 10.1188/07.ONF.1075-1076

changes in dietary habits, lifestyle, and personal practices. Section three gives fuller, broader, and deeper information to keep individuals on track and includes articles from other writers in the field.

*Healing Digestive Illness: Root Causes and Solutions* is a self-help read for anyone truly committed to change. The book is very comprehensive as to what steps need to be taken for success. The author clearly indicates that the process is a lifetime commitment and not for the frivolous. I found the content to be educational; in conjunction with medical care, it offers the reader options. For individuals dealing with life-challenging digestive diseases and disorders, I believe a full discussion with medical caregivers is imperative before embarking down the path to healing.

Nurses should discuss this book cautiously with patients; however, I believe that a medical caregiver should be involved before any recommendations are made. A healthy individual making lifestyle changes has the best opportunity for success.

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## V I D E O

**A Lion in the House. Five Children. Six Years. True Stories From the War on Cancer.** Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert. *Yellow Springs, OH: A Lion in the House, LLC, 2006; DVD: 214 minutes, \$339; text: 160 pages, \$19.95.*



DVD, Softcover

*A Lion in the House. Five Children. Six Years. True Stories From the War on Cancer*, an official selection at the 2006 Sundance Festival, was the endeavor of Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert, both parents of childhood cancer survivors.

The four discs and book explore the challenges of the five families. Disc 1, titled *Facing the End of Life*, is 35 minutes long and gives the real-life views and interactions among family members and the medical team. Disc 1 illustrates the difficulty in making choices for a child at the end of life and provides a candid picture of Justin, a teenager with leukemia, and his family as they handle the situation. It explores the complexity of making tough decisions and living with those decisions. The communication process, including the breakdowns and barriers that occur among the parents, extended family, and medical staff, obviously is painful. The end-of-life decisions are real.

Disc 2 in the series, *Stories of Resilience*, is 37 minutes long and looks at childhood

cancer and its ongoing impact on the family. Disc 2 gives the perspective of a single parent, Regina, and how she juggled working full-time and caring for her son Alex F., who had non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Even though the families are culturally and socioeconomically different from each other, they endure the same types of problems, including returning to school, maintaining friendships, and dealing with the physical difficulties.

Disc 3, *Stories of Survivorship*, is 22 minutes long and explores the day-to-day battle waged by the families. Some families are caring not only for a child with cancer but also for other family members. Beth talks about her initial devastation at hearing that her child Jennifer had cancer. On the other hand, a teenage patient, Tim, speaks about the attention he receives now as compared to before he was diagnosed with cancer. Their emotions are sad but true.

Disc 4, *A Lion in the House*, is the longest at 120 minutes. *A Lion in the House* explores the lives of all five families. The real-life stories include Alex L., who had leukemia and went through a bone marrow transplantation; Justin, who battled leukemia for more than nine years; Jennifer, who also had leukemia and is dealing with late effects; Tim, who had Hodgkin lymphoma; and Alex F., who had non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

The DVD set and accompanying book are uplifting and, at times, sad. The films and book are a unique view into childhood cancer and give the real-life, day-in and day-out view of patients, caregivers, the medical team, extended family, and social support of these families as they seek treatment at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. The entire set is quite long; however, the shorter discs are easier to watch, with the shortest at 22 minutes. The program is appropriate for viewing by several audiences, including caregivers, nurses, physicians, family members of patients with cancer, teachers, social workers, and other providers of social support. The film gives the view from inside, the side that most people will never experience.

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## WORTH A LOOK

**The Nurse's Guide to Teaching Diabetes Self-Management.** Rita G. Mertig. *New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2006, 184 pages, \$35.*

*The Nurses' Guide to Teaching Diabetes Self-Management* covers just about everything that a person with type 1 or 2 diabetes

needs to know to remain healthy. The guide is written by a nurse educator who also has diabetes. The title suggests that nurses and people knowledgeable in biologic sciences are the primary audiences for this book, but the information is explained so clearly that nonmedical audiences can understand the majority of the text. The book is divided into two parts. The first, titled "The Diabetes Conundrum," explains the basics about how the disease is classified, medication that helps insulin regulation, and the best ways to stay healthy through physical activity and nutrition. The second part of the guide, "Diabetes Self-Management," describes diabetes in populations with unique situations. For example, one chapter discusses children with diabetes and another gives helpful information for women who developed diabetes before they were pregnant, as well as gestational diabetes.

Each chapter begins with inspiring quotations, including those from Bill Clinton and Eleanor Roosevelt. At the end of each chapter, a comprehensive reference list is provided so that readers can find resources and read more on the topic. The charts and tables throughout the book are easy to comprehend and summarize the literature simply and accurately. A plus to the book is the chapter on client noncompliance. According to the text, client noncompliance is a major concern that most nurses encounter. The chapter explains several reasons why patients are noncompliant and gives nurses a clearer understanding of what they can do to help their patients with these issues and realities.

Overall, the book is an extremely helpful and well-organized resource and can be used as a handy reference to help nurses teach their patients about diabetes. The book would need to be supplemented by a reference text for more detailed information and care needs for patients with diabetes. Patients also might benefit from reading the book because it provides basic information about diabetes in a general, informative format.

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