

TAKING A BITE OUT OF CANCER

A Golden Mnemonic from Rochelle Lesser, School Psychologist at the Land of PureGold Foundation—landofpuregold.com

Take control of the situation by arming yourself with the most up to date information you can. Ask for printed materials or information from the professionals you meet. Obtain resources to help you understand your dog's specific disease and treatment options. And, finally work together with your dog's health care team so that you understand the reliability and validity of all the information you've gathered.

Assemble a team of compassionate, and trusted specialists. This may include: a conventional veterinarian, a certified veterinary oncologist, a certified radiation oncologist, and/or a holistic veterinarian certified in areas such as homeopathy, nutrition, Chinese herbs, acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage therapy. Do not be afraid to get a second opinion before selecting your best course of action.

Kee a running record from day one, writing everything down in a specially designated notebook on: treatments utilized, medications along with your dog's response, progress on combating treatment side effects, supplements that are added, and changes in habits and behaviors. Write down any questions you may have before each visit is made to your dog's doctor. Take notes during discussions with your dog's specialists. And, don't be embarrassed to repeat information back to ensure that you truly understand what was said.

Incorporate excellent nutrition and a homemade cancer diet as this will play an integral role in your dog's survival. Organic ingredients are the best! Use supplements to boost the immune system or address adverse treatment effects. Also, introduce changes to diet or supplements slowly in order to be sure that its effect is a positive, rather than stressful or compromising, one.

Neutralize the hazardous effects of our chemically-laden environment. Use only filtered water. Do not use any chemical agents to clean your carpets, floors or surfaces. Only use vinegar, mild soap, and water. Do not use any pesticides on the lawn or in the house. Also, do not expose your dog to environmental toxins or second-hand smoke.

Gather strength from your family and friends. Bring a partner or friend with you when you talk to specialists involved in your dog's care. And, make sure that all discussions that you have involves everyone who loves your dog, including family members and children. Guarantee an acceptance of what is shared so that everyone feels comfortable in asking questions and expressing their feelings and opinions.

Anticipate that there will be many ups and downs during this new chapter in your life. Plan for emergencies by keeping an assortment of medications on hand and having various mobility aids available (e.g., Bottoms Up Leash, Folding Pet Ramp, Pet Stairs).

Be kind and gentle and compassionate to yourself. Know that you are doing the best you can do, and that your dog knows that. Let go of judgment about what you can and cannot do. Your dog will be okay either way. Simply forgive yourself, love yourself, and care for yourself.

Insure the integrity of your dog's physical body and immune system. That means, absolutely no vaccinations or caustic flea applications! And, protect your dog's lymph nodes by using an Easy Walk Harness which places no strain on a dog's body. Only use a light-weighted collar for ID purposes, having it hang slightly from the neck, rather than being tightly affixed around it.

Take comfort in knowing that here are no incorrect decisions. And, do not worry about what others may think about your treatment choices. Just trust in your judgment, knowing that you are the only person who fully understands your dog's emotional, social, and physical being. With all your knowledge in hand, you need only listen to your heart in order to make the right decisions.

Embrace life. It is a precious gift. And, be sure to remember this. Every day is a good day that allows you and your furry love to remain together.