Breuss Cancer Cure

Abstract and key points

The core of the Breuss Cancer Cure is a rigid diet, which consists of a 42-day fast in combination with special vegetable juices and teas. Additional recommendations are included, for instance, to avoid so-called water veins. According to Breuss’s theory, cancer requires solid food to survive in the body.

The claims of efficacy are not supported by acceptable evidence and there are no reliable scientific data to support the claimed mode of action.

It is likely that the recommended fast could be dangerous for cancer patients because there is a potential risk of general malnutrition. As Breuss bans conventional cancer treatment while patients undergo his treatment, there is a risk that patients will discontinue conventional treatment.

Scientific examinations of the benefits and dangers of Breuss Cancer Cure are lacking.

What is it?

Description

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Rudolph Breuss was born in Austria in 1899. He first worked as an electrician, and later as a naturopath. He developed the Breuss Cancer Cure or Breuss Total Cancer Treatment. He died in 1990.

Ingredients, application and dosage
The treatment is described in three books written by Breuss, but it is not clear whether the publishers have changed, added or left out original statements. For example, the English translation of Breuss’ book does not mention that he did not allow radiation treatment and injections concurrently with his treatment. Further amendments were written by Thomar.

Breuss rigidly stipulated that cancer patients are not allowed to drink or eat anything other than the juices and teas he recommended for a period for 42 days. He gave strict instructions about the preparation and ingestion of specific juices and teas. Juices include beetroot, carrots, celeriac, black radish and potatoes in cases where the patient has been diagnosed with cancer of the liver. All vegetables had to be organically grown and vegetable sediments were to be removed. The maximum ingested amount of juice was 500 ml per day.

Breuss allotted three teas for all types of cancers: "sage tea", "kidney tea" and "cranesbill tea". "Sage tea" includes *Salvia officinalis* (sage), *Hypericum perforatum* (St. John’s wort), *Mentha piperita* (peppermint) and *Melissa officinalis* (balm) in a specific ratio. The tea could be taken as desired. "Kidney tea" includes horsetail *Equisetum arvense* (balm), *Urtica dioica* (stinging nettle), *Polygonum aviculare* (knotgrass) and *Hypericum perforatum* (St. John’s wort), at a special ratio and to be taken only for the first three weeks. "Cranesbill tea" includes *Geranium robertianum* (red cranesbill) and only one half cup of cold tea should be ingested per day. For special types of cancer, additional teas are recommended. The use of sugar was not permitted.

In cases of leukemia, patients would have to drink the recommended teas and juices, but could eat anything else with the exception of meat soup, beef, pork and reheated food (the English translation mentions beef soup, pork, chemical food additives, burnt food and fats).

Breuss further stipulated that patients should not start the Breuss Cancer Cure immediately after surgery, but should wait for at least two to five months. No concurrent treatments were permitted during the treatment. He recommended fresh air and exercise, and smoking should be stopped. Furthermore, the patient should not be lying above so-called “water veins” (sources of ground radiation) and should avoid moth powder, insecticides, aerosol cans or air fresheners in the house. Breuss stated that patients who had completed the Breuss Cancer Cure should never again eat reheated food, but could be allowed to gradually start eating salt-reduced, light food, and should drink approximately 60 ml of the vegetable juice per day for another two to four weeks.

Additional instructions were added in 1987: patients should have one or two bowls of onion broth a day (only the liquid). To support the heart, patients should take 20 to 40 drops of *Crataegus oxyacantha* (hawthorn) tincture. People with diabetes should continue insulin treatment.

Instructions published in 1990: for substitution of calcium and potassium, patients should drink a tea made from *Plantago lanceolata* (plantain lance), *Plantago major* (broad-leaved plantain), *Cetraria islandica* (Iceland moss), *Plantago major* (broad-leaved plantain), *Cetraria islandica* (Iceland moss), *Pulmonaria officinalis* (lungwort), *Glechoma hederacea* (ground ivy), *Verbascum thapsus* (mullein) and *Ligusticum mutellina* (Meum mutellina herb). Patients with liver or gall bladder problems should drink a broth of bean pods instead of onion broth.
Claims of efficacy

Breuss claimed that since 1950 he has successfully treated more than 2000 patients. He estimated that since 1986, an additional 40 000 patients with cancer and other “incurable diseases” had been healed by the used of his methods. As proof he cited testimonials and letters of thanks written in the period from 1971 to 1985. Breuss claimed that treatment failures could only occur if his instructions were not strictly adhered to. He believed that about one million people could be healed, “if the so-called cancer research and the orthodox medicine would be with me instead against me.”

Mechanism of action/alleged indications

Breuss postulated that cancer cells live exclusively on solid foods (“...the only patients that died were patients that were given something to eat.”). He claimed that cancer cells are not able to feed on vegetable juices and cancer cells die if patients only ingest vegetable juices and special teas for a period of 42 days. Breuss quoted Bruno Vornarburg who said that the carcinogenic process feeds on proteins and that a tumor can not continue to exist if the patient lives on a protein-free diet. Furthermore, Breuss claimed that after a protein-free diet, the body attacks and destroys the tumor like “surgery without a knife”. Breuss believed his intervention was not only a cure, but that it also served preventively against cancer.

Prevalence of use

Although the book the “Breuss Cancer Cure” was translated into Chinese, Croatian, English, French, Greek, Italian, Polish, Russian, Serbian and Spanish, no exact data on prevalence of use have been published. Internet searches located several patients reporting their experiences with the treatment, and an Internet homepage reported 122583 visitors between August 2004 and the beginning of December 2010. The Internet search also identified one physician and two spa hotels offering the Breuss treatment.

Costs

The juices are produced and promoted by Biotta INC. and can be purchased in health food stores, drugstores and over the internet. The required 21 litres cost €131 or more. Costs for teas are additional. Spa hotels offer the Breuss Cancer Cure for around €2600 to €4700, or more.

Does it work?

Clinical trials

There is only one small clinical trial – involving eight cancer patients with metastatic diseases – that has investigated the “Breuss Cancer Cure”. The study did not use a control group. The authors reported two complete, and two partial remissions and that the patients felt better than expected during the intervention and had experienced less pain. During the trial, one patient died, and two died shortly after completion of the trial. The authors did not attribute the deaths to the intervention. It was claimed that if that trial had been
designed as a conventional phase-1-study, it would produce results showing Breuss to be an effective treatment with minor toxicity for patients with advanced cancer. No further studies have been published. Thomar is currently looking for people who have reported success with the "Breuss Cancer Cure", in order to carry out a retrospective study.

Case reports

Jungi stated, without presenting data, that tumors usually become smaller during a fast but after resuming the consumption of nutrition, grow more quickly. Pfotmueller put forward similar statements, but without providing any empirical data.

The case reports found on the Internet lack valid documentation.

Animal studies

Caloric restriction (undernutrition without malnutrition) delays the incidence of various types of tumours and decreases their growth. Tumours can be sensitive and resistant to dietary restriction. Starvation (fasting) is a form of malnutrition. It has no beneficial effects on tumor growth, but tumor growth might be stimulated during an acute fast.

Is Breuss Cancer Cure safe?

There is a lack of published information regarding the safety of the Breuss cancer treatment. Senn and Jungi reported on several patients in whom the Breuss cure had led to a rapid and dangerous cachexia. Douwes et al. observed weight-loss in the range from 9 and 16 kg. This reported malnutrition constitutes a substantial risk involved with the Breuss method. Malnutrition has a known negative effect on morbidity, mortality, hospital stay and quality of life for cancer patients. The “Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Onkologie” and the “Schweizerische Krebsliga” published documentation on the Breuss cure in which they referred to the publication of Senn and Jungi and advised against the method. As Breuss forbade any conventional cancer treatments, patients could potentially be turned away from possibly beneficial conventional cancer treatments.

Citation


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