



Yael Mermelstein

An Angel of Life

Mr. Abraham Safirstein

Mr. Abraham Safirstein is the founder of Safirstein Research, an innovative, holistic therapeutic approach that deals with disease from the roots up. Mr. Safirstein's program was born from the worst kind of pain — the loss of his beloved oldest son Ariel to cancer. I spoke with Mr. Safirstein to discover what he has to offer someone who has received a devastating diagnosis. Can he really offer hope at a time when everyone else has given up?



Unconventional Weapons

“Conventional medicine bombards the whole body in its attack against cancer,” Mr. Safirstein tells me in his thick Argentinian accent. “But I believe there are other modalities that can be more successful than the conventional approach alone. I believe in solving the underlying cause of cancer. Why does the body produce cancerous cells to begin with? My approach involves giving the body the ammunition it needs to fight disease according to the way that Hashem designed it to work.”

His Story

“In 1993, eight months after his wedding, my son Ariel and his wife came to visit us for Sukkos. He had a small bump on the back of his head, and he was complaining of pain. He had already gone to an oncologist, who performed a needle biopsy and told him it was fatty tissue, nothing to worry about. But the bump was still growing and hurting. On Yom Tov, I told him that if it still hurt we needed to have it checked out.

“I didn’t tell him, but I was very concerned. A friend of mine is chief radiologist at a prestigious hospital, and he arranged a CT scan immediately for Motzoei Yom Tov. I don’t know which is worse, not knowing, or knowing the truth... we were devastated to find out that Ariel had a brain tumor, a malignant schwannoma.



“Ariel underwent a risky 12-hour surgery to remove the tumor. *Baruch Hashem*, the surgery was successful, and did not cause any damage to the sensitive nerve centers in the area. After that, his oncologist recommended that he undergo aggressive radiation treatments to prevent recurrence. We were very careful to follow the doctor’s advice to prevent the cancer from ever coming back, and all the doctors we consulted concurred with this treatment plan.

“We felt tremendous gratitude to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* that Ariel came through and was now healthy.

I felt like we’d woken up from a long and terrible nightmare, and life could now go back to normal. The testing twice a year to make sure everything was still okay would be the only reminder of the experience we had been through.”

But eighteen months later, Ariel felt that something was wrong again. He went back to the oncologist. The tumor had returned.

“What can I say?” Mr. Safirstein says. “You hear it many times — Ploni’s cancer came back, Almoni’s cancer returned with a vengeance. But you don’t think it’s going to happen to your child. It hurts in a place you can’t even reach.”

The same surgeon was summoned to remove the tumor. Six grueling hours later, the tumor was once again removed without any nerve damage.

“We were so grateful to the *Ribbono shel Olam* for the



"I have a sound knowledge of biology and biochemistry, and I decided that I was going to pursue my own research to heal my son.

miraculous success He blessed us with. The doctor called us aside in the waiting room and explained that even though this time the surgery was faster, he had encountered difficulty working with tissue damaged by the radiation. I asked him, 'Are we going to do radiation again for prevention?' That's when he revealed that the dose of radiation that Ariel had been given after the first surgery was the maximum dose a person can tolerate in a lifetime. That shocked me; we were never told that was the case.

"So,' I asked him, 'what do we do now if the cancer returns?' His answer, 'We will cut it out again,' essentially told me there was no cure, nothing left to do for Ariel other than surgery. I felt so helpless. I had no idea where to turn."

Ariel went back home to resume his life yet again. Recuperation was relatively quick, and soon enough, he was immersed in the normal daily grind.

But Mr. Safirstein couldn't rest.

"I decided that something was wrong here," Mr. Safirstein says. "There had to be some sort of underlying problem that was causing this. Why would a young man receive the

maximum dose of preventive radiation only to have the tumor return? Hashem created us *b'chochmah*; if you cut yourself, you heal. Our bodies were created with modes of self-repair. We have strong immune systems. There must be something that could be done; I just didn't know what.

"I have a sound knowledge of biology and biochemistry, and I decided that I was going to pursue my own research to heal my son. I couldn't go on feeling helpless. 'I am an intelligent person,' I told myself. 'Doctors read studies; I can read studies, too. It will not happen overnight, but no matter what it takes, with the *Eibershter's* help, I will find a solution."

He Would Stop at Nothing

"I started researching on the internet. It was a first step. I was living in North Miami Beach at the time, and was a member in a shul full of doctors who were my friends and were eager to help."

According to the oncologists, Ariel's type of cancer was rare, with no chemotherapy options available. The only possibility of treatment was surgery and radiation — and radiation was already out of the question.

"Then one of the doctors in shul, Dr. Moshe Moss, called me over after *davening* on a Motzoei Shabbos and asked me if I'd be interested in learning more about how to deal with cancer. He'd done a lot of independent research on dealing with cancer in the wake of his wife's untimely passing from leukemia. My wife and I went over to his house to hear what he had to say.

"As soon as we walked in, I noticed a large number of bottles containing nutritional supplements on his kitchen counter. He saw my eyebrows go up and smiled. He went on to explain that nutritional deficiencies are the foundation of all disease. When the body is lacking in the nutrients it needs to maintain and carry out all of its diverse functions, sooner or later, something will go wrong. For me, that conversation opened up the door towards figuring out what really causes cancer and how we can fix it."

Mr. Safirstein began spending six to eight hours a day on research. He returned from his work as a general contractor at five p.m. and would conduct his research until two or three in the morning.

"I realized that conventional medicine (chemotherapy, radiation, and/or surgery) might remove the cancer completely, to the point that not even one cell is left. But the underlying cause has not been addressed. Unfortunately, the same problem that triggered the cancer to develop the first time will usually cause it again. I needed to find out what that was.

"I learned to discern good research from bad," Mr. Safirstein says. "Every time you read a study, you see their



sources. Sometimes the references are solid, and sometimes they're misleading or just plain wrong. In order for me to feel comfortable using a study, it has to have been done by a qualified scientist at an important institution. It has to be well sourced, and those sources need to complement the original article.

"I took the time to read every footnote, never content with just reading the abstract of an article. I checked all calculations made in an article according to the leading research. If the results didn't make sense, I discarded the study. I approach a piece of research asking, are they assuming or are they proving? There are too many articles in prestigious journals that are unproven assumptions."

Meanwhile, Ariel had experienced three years of health. He and his wife had three children now, including a set of twins.

"But then," Mr. Safirstein says, "the nightmare resumed. The tumor had come back."

At this point, Mr. Safirstein focused his research on finding an existing holistic therapy that could help get rid of Ariel's tumor, in addition to finding out which nutrients were crucial to cancer prevention. Ariel began a regimen of ozone therapy, intravenous vitamin C, nutritional supplements and a nutrient-rich diet at the advice of a radiation-oncologist-turned-holistic-practitioner who was able to substantially improve his condition.

"This doctor explained to us that as a radiation oncologist, he would have never taken the risk of using high doses of radiation on a schwannoma — which is a slow-growing cancer — because that very radiation is capable of creating a new and more aggressive form of cancer."

After a month of this therapy in Miami, Ariel had to return home to his family. Once he returned to his regular grind, it was harder for him to keep up with diet and the ozone treatment. Slowly, he began to deteriorate.

"Shortly thereafter, I found out about a doctor in Houston, Dr. Stanislaw Burzynski, who had developed a novel treatment in dealing with brain tumors. With Hashem's help, he was able to shrink Ariel's tumor to a third of its size within six months."

But one day, they received a shattering blow. Ariel had developed a secondary brain tumor. This tumor had nothing to do with the original cancer. On the contrary, this tumor, an aggressive sarcoma, was a result of the very radiation he'd received to prevent the cancer from coming back.

"When cancer metastasizes, it's always the same kind of cancer, only in a different part of the body," Mr. Safirstein

Why stop here?

Mr. Safirstein's research has branched out to treat other diseases as well.

"As I began to unravel the way the body works and the effect that nutritional deficiency has on its ability to function, I found that other conditions and diseases are also caused by nutritional deficiencies. As the need to address these conditions arose in people who were close to me, I applied what I learned and found it to be effective.

"For example, my wife's cholesterol levels were very high; her total cholesterol was 292 and the triglycerides were 680. The doctor wanted to prescribe Lipitor, a cholesterol-lowering medication. I'd done extensive research on cholesterol and I was nearly certain I could help her without medications and all of their accompanying side effects.

"I told the doctor (as he was a friend of ours), 'I know what the underlying problem is. Give me one month and let's do a new test at the end of the month.'"

The doctor agreed, but Mr. Safirstein's wife was reluctant. She agreed to try his program for a month, but after a week, she had second thoughts.

"I told her, 'Let's take a blood test now. I know it's only been a week, but maybe we'll see results. Then you can decide what to do.'"

"We took the test and the results were staggering. Her total cholesterol had gone down to 198 and her triglycerides were 42. These results are not achievable with any drug I'm aware of. Other people have tried my program since then, and have seen similar results."

Osteoporosis is another example of a disease Mr. Safirstein was able to tackle.

"When my mother was sick, I noticed that the program I put her on to fight her cancer was having an unexpected side effect — it was restoring her lost bone mineral density. Upon further research, I was able to isolate which component of the program was having that effect, and that's how I developed my osteoporosis program.

"At age 87, my mother was missing 23% of her bone mineral density. Within 14 months she'd regained 7.9%. Four years later, her bone mineral density has continued to improve, and her most recent test

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showed a further gain of 3.3% in the spine and 13% in the hip, which is unheard of regardless of the drug or treatment of choice.

“People can suffer their entire lives from illnesses that can be reversed by giving the body what it needs.”

“The idea is to solve the underlying problem. Hashem made a perfect body but, like a car, it needs maintenance. Our bodies are biochemical factories — if you don’t supply the proper raw materials, you cannot expect to achieve good results.”

“I found out that as strong as cancer is, it also has many weaknesses. There are many things that can be done to take advantage of those weaknesses.”

says. “For example, breast cancer will spread to the spine or the brain, but it will still be breast cancer in the spine or breast cancer in the brain. With Ariel, a completely different kind of tumor — which is caused by radiation — appeared in exactly the spot where he received the radiation.

“I later learned that there is an 8-12-year window within which this tends to occur, as it did with Ariel. I also found that the statistics for the so-called preventive radiation that was enthusiastically promoted to us originally were not all they were made out to be. When I checked the numbers and conclusions in the studies regarding this kind of radiation, I discovered that the patients were only followed for five years, and that it was effective only 17% of the time. That means the other 83% did not have the benefit of prevention, and had all the risk of developing a very serious secondary cancer as a result within 8-12 years, outside of the five-year window the study provided.”

Mr. Safirstein continued with his research, but it was too late for his son. There was nothing that could be done. Ariel

was niftar on 9 Elul 5761. *Yehi zichro baruch.*

Pushing Through

The fact that the very thing that was supposed to cure Ariel ended up causing his incurable tumor was a big blow to Mr. Safirstein. But whereas some would cave in to despair, Mr. Safirstein now had renewed fortitude to forge ahead. He was no longer working for his son, but in his son’s memory.

“I felt so close to finding the answer before my son was niftar,” he says. “I knew that I needed to keep going.

“I found out that as strong as cancer is, it also has many weaknesses,” Mr. Safirstein says. “There are many things that can be done to take advantage of those weaknesses. Cancer takes control of the host in a multitude of ways; I needed to cut its resources.”

His research bore fruit. Five years later, he thought he had the elusive answer — he believed he understood the underpinnings of cancer and how to control it.

“In order to understand how to fight it, I needed to know what I was fighting. That led me to study cell biology. The obvious question was, what is the main difference between a healthy cell and a cancer cell?

“Lo and behold, Dr. Otto Warburg received a Nobel Prize in 1931 for discovering the difference in the metabolism between healthy cells and cancer cells. He discovered that healthy cells are aerobic, meaning they generate their energy through the use of oxygen (respiration), while unhealthy cells are anaerobic, meaning they use glucose fermentation for energy (glycolysis), which is a very inefficient way to produce energy.

“That is cancer’s first weakness. I found a saccharide, which is a form of sugar that is missing one atom of oxygen, that aerobic cells may use for energy without a problem, but anaerobic cells such as cancer cannot, so it gets stuck in their glucose receptors and effectively starves them.

“I learned about the prevalence and danger of vitamin D



deficiency; I found out that vitamin D is actually a hormone, which controls the cell's access to the information in the DNA. Without adequate amounts of vitamin D, the cell has no idea what to do when faced with a challenge. Deficiency of this hormone is a huge risk factor in cancer development."

Then followed research on botanical extracts, medicinal mushrooms, essential fatty acids and their effect on cell membrane fluidity, and select essential minerals, vitamins, and bio-identical hormones. Each of these were a piece in a complex puzzle that came together through understanding

the underlying cause of cancer, not just the symptoms.

"But what was I supposed to do?" he asks. "Climb on the rooftops and shout out, 'I know how to help people with cancer! Please come be my guinea pig!'"

Mr. Safirstein's first opportunity to put theory into practice came when his mother was diagnosed with terminal endometrial cancer at the age of 85. She underwent a hysterectomy to remove the cancer, but nevertheless, within three months she had a recurrence and the biopsy revealed stage IV metastasized endometrial cancer, a very aggressive



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“We can stand by, wringing our hands in despair, or we can proactively do something about it.”

cancer with a dismal prognosis. The median survival time for this kind of cancer is 12 months; the maximum is 18 months. The oncologist told her that there is nothing available to improve this prognosis, but they can try radiation and if that doesn't work, chemotherapy. The side effects of these treatment protocols included interior burns and incontinence. She flatly rejected it; what was the point?

“When my mother told me what the oncologist proposed, I told her that I'm pretty sure I know what can be done to get rid of the problem. She decided to give

it a try. What other choice did she have?

“I put together a program that included the nutrients that I mentioned above, and gave my mother a chart of how much of each supplement to take over the course of the day. She stuck to my program faithfully and enriched her diet with cancer-fighting foods.

“My brother and sister called me demanding to know how I had the audacity to go against the oncologist and try something that has never been proven. I answered that the oncologist herself said that radiation and chemotherapy have never worked for this kind of cancer, so I am not going against her advice because she has no viable option to offer. I had confidence in each component of the program I put together, as each one was scientifically sound and proven and would have no side effects; it was only the combination of the various parts as a program that was 'novel.' In any case, it was ultimately my mother's decision.

“Two months later, my mother went back to the oncologist and she could no longer find the tumor. She called in an associate to try to locate the tumor because two months earlier it was easily palpable and she could not fathom why it was not there anymore. He could not find it either.

“She sent my mother for a scan, and where the tumor had been before, there was nothing left. The doctor said that the tumor was probably reabsorbed but that it would come back. 'Nobody gets away with this kind of cancer,' she said. My mother said, 'We'll see.' Today, six years later, my mother continues to follow my maintenance program. She still goes for tests every six months and *baruch Hashem*, she is still cancer-free, *bli ayin hara*.”



Word Spreads

After this initial success, Mr. Safirstein started to get calls from people who were diagnosed with cancer and wanted to hear more about how his mother overcame her disease. Then a woman who heard about Mr. Safirstein's program got in touch with him.

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“She sent my mother for a scan, and where the tumor had been before, there was nothing left.”

She had been given a terminal diagnosis: stage IV breast cancer metastasized to the lungs, bones, liver, and stomach encasement. She opted to pursue Mr. Safirstein’s program; after a month she was feeling well enough to implement chemotherapy in conjunction with continuing his program. She was subsequently able to withstand full doses of chemotherapy without side effects. This woman was very well known and when people saw her dramatic comeback, word of Mr. Safirstein’s program began spreading wildly. He realized that something was going very right, *baruch Hashem*, and that he needed to dedicate more time to what eventually became a full-time project.



What do the doctors say?

Mr. Safirstein encourages clients to run his program by their oncologists to gain their approval. Most doctors approve it because they recognize that it won’t hurt and may help, concurrently with conventional therapies.

Dr. Avrum J. Epstein, a radiologist from Skokie, IL, with over 30 years’ experience, has reviewed imaging results of several people who have followed Mr. Safirstein’s program. “Many of [these patients] had positive outcomes that are unusual by conventional means,” says Dr. Epstein, “including some that I considered terminal at first impression and ended up in substantial improvement or full remission.”

Michael B. Schachter, MD, CNS, director of the Schachter Center for Complementary Medicine in Rockland County, New York, has treated cancer patients for more than 35 years and is a leading expert in Integrative Oncology. He is similarly impressed by the results Mr. Safirstein has

achieved.

“I was particularly impressed,” says Dr. Schachter, “of the ‘before’ and ‘after’ CT-scan results I reviewed of stage IV advanced cancer patients who sometimes showed complete resolution of their disease on his program. This is rarely seen in any cancer treatment, conventional or alternative.”

His Core Discovery

“What is the most important thing I have learned in all my years of research? That the old saying ‘An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure’ is woefully inaccurate when it comes to cancer; it’s more like a million tons of cure. Cancer is very hard to cure and unbearably difficult to go through. But preventing cancer? That’s not so hard; once you know what allows cancer to develop, you can take the steps to prevent it.

“It is impossible to ignore the fact that the incidence of cancer in our community has increased at an alarming rate. We can stand by, wringing our hands in despair, or we can proactively do something about it. Most of the food we are eating nowadays is styrofoam with flavor; it looks good and tastes good, but the nutritional value is dismal. What are we going to do about it?

“The same goes for many other conditions we are plagued with, like heart disease, diabetes, infertility, developmental issues in children, ADD/ADHD, arthritis, osteoporosis; you name it, these things are preventable and may be reversed by natural means. We do not need to suffer so many tragedies, R”l. *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* gave us a wondrous immune system that when properly maintained can keep us healthy and vibrant until 120.

“Our environment is loaded with hazards, it is up to us to give our bodies the tools to tackle everything that comes our way, and those tools are fairly easy to obtain. That’s the message I want to get out to our community; I want to motivate people to take action and protect themselves and their families. That is the legacy I want to create in Ariel’s memory.” **B**



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