

From the *Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine*, (Vol 17, No. 2, July, 2002)

**Dr. Max Gerson: Healing the Hopeless**, by Howard Straus (Kingston, Ontario: Quarry Press, 2002)  
ISBN 1-55082-290-X. Softcover, 397 pages plus bibliography.

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Really good conspiracies take decades to surface. In the case of natural-healing physician Max Gerson, M.D., attempts to discredit his vegetable juice, raw food and coffee enema cancer therapy were so effective that the whole story has never been told.

Until now.

Dr. Gerson's grandson, Howard Straus, has just published the definitive Gerson biography. It is fascinating reading, at times bordering on the unbelievable. And what a story: a respected physician discovers a natural cure for cancer, and the medical-pharmaceutical lobby actively and relentlessly conspires keeps it from the public.

All of it is provably true. Mr. Straus has gone far beyond requirements to research his subject and support his statements. And he has had a family "in" that no other Gerson biographer has: his mother, Charlotte Gerson Straus, the doctor's daughter. Together, and with expert assistance from Barbara Marinacci, they have assembled documentation I believe to be sufficient to topple the tower of organized, politicized medicine.

For over sixty years, cancer treatment and research has been almost entirely restricted to cut, zap and drug: surgery, radiation and chemotherapy. Billions and billions of dollars have been expended investigating every cure BUT a nutritional one.

Where is the real incentive to cure the disease, anyway? Business is good. It is now pretty much an open secret that more people live off cancer than die from it. The big money is to be made in disease, not in health. Dr. Gerson guaranteed his own ostracism when he dedicated his life to find out why patients lived, and what could be done to be sure they did. Then he went and did it.

In 6th grade, Mrs. Palmer taught my class that debates are won when you present your case as more compellingly and more factually than the opposition. This may be true in most endeavors, with the exception of medicine. Linus Pauling and Abram Hoffer, who each write favorably of Gerson's work, pioneered and popularized widespread megadosing with vitamin C and niacin, respectively. They did this so successfully that the only angle left to their many critics was the *ad hominum*: attack the men, not the idea.

"Coffee Enema" Gerson was attacked in much the same way. It has been ridicule, not science, that has kept the Gerson therapy away from your local oncologist's office. Try a simple test: ask ten doctors what they think of using the Gerson therapy against cancer. Then ask the same doctors what they KNOW of the Gerson therapy. I'll lay good odds that about all they know is that the guy used coffee enemas. "Would you like cream and sugar with that?" a physician once said to me. And you'll likely hear worse.

Room temperature, fresh coffee enemas offer at least two vital benefits for a seriously ill patient: pain relief, and detoxification. One does have to accept the second to appreciate the first.

Gerson's extensive medical experience taught him that both are accomplished. Patients and physicians who follow Gerson's protocol have seen that he's right. That is the only standard that is absolutely necessary.

Too bad that some critics' egos let them forget the true healer's prime directive: "For the good of the patient, to the best of my ability." If there is a down side to vegetable juices, I am yet to hear it. The worst reproach I've encountered is that, while harmless, vegetable juices have no special properties against cancer. How can that be, when doctors now know (and our grandmas have known for generations) that vegetables DO in fact help prevent and arrest cancer. All vegetables are high fiber and low fat. Tomatoes are loaded with lycopene. Orange and green vegetables tremendous sources of carotene. Broccoli, cauliflower, kale, Brussels sprouts and cabbage (the cruciform vegetables) are all heavyweights in the fight against cancer.

How, pray tell, could their juices NOT have anti-cancer properties? Juice consists of the entire cytoplasmic contents of a vegetable's cells, but without an unpalatable excess of indigestible fibrous cell wall. It's the com without the can; the nut without the shell; the cash without the bank.

The two chief purposes of juicing is to increase the quantity of vegetables consumed, and to increase a patient's absorption of what is consumed. More vegetables is good. Better utilization is good. Ergo, juicing is good, and Gerson was right.

I find that, like a method actor, I need to get into character before discussing a book. To this end, I had two quarts of carrot juice for lunch and now I can feel the part in a big way. I am juiced up and in the groove. And for all my 20 years of juicing, for all the many miles on my juicers, I owe a personal debt of thanks to Dr. Gerson. He was pretty much the first physician ever to plainly set all this down into a clear-cut, specific therapeutic regimen. This is provided in great detail in two other books: *The Gerson Therapy*, by Charlotte Gerson and Morton Walker (2001). NY: Kensington Publishing Corp. ISBN 1-57566-628-6 and *A Cancer Therapy: Results of Fifty Cases* by Max Gerson (1977) Del Mar, CA: Totality Books.

In the next edition of *Dr. Max Gerson: Healing the Hopeless*, I would like to see paragraph-by-paragraph footnote references. Many a good-reading history book provides this for obsessive scholars who just have to challenge every statement. They are out there, and I think the tightest possible citation system is best suited for such a controversial work as this. I also think serious students of the Gerson therapy would appreciate a topic index. I liked the inclusion of photographs and an exhaustive international bibliography. I think translating the mostly German-language reference titles into English would be a worthwhile project.

*Dr. Max Gerson: Healing the Hopeless* is a tribute, an education, and a warning: there is a price to pay for true lifesaving innovation in medicine. The best possible review of Dr. Gerson's life story could not surpass what the great Nobel laureate Albert Schweitzer, M.D., wrote:

"I see in Dr. Max Gerson one of the most eminent geniuses in the history of medicine. He has achieved more than seemed possible under adverse conditions. Many of his basic ideas have been adopted without having his name connected with them. He leaves a legacy which commands attention and which will assure him his due place. Those whom he has cured will attest to the truth of his ideas."

"Medical heretic" Dr. Robert Mendelsohn said that one grandmother is worth two MD's. Good fortune has favored Howard Straus. His grandfather was worth hundreds.

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