

(Continued from page 6)

is interpreted as a sign that the cancer cells are dying.)

According to the *Penthouse* article, 44.3 percent of the 273 patients Burton has had in the Bahamas, many of them considered terminal cases, have showed containment or regression of their cancers.

Arla Amara, a Clinton antique dealer, heard about Dr. Burton's work during her father's illness from brain cancer. "He was given up for dead," she says. "I told he had maybe four months to live." Amara took her father to the Bahamas while he was recuperating from a coma that left him unable to walk or speak. His tumor had grown to the size of a tangerine.

Amara's father lived for seven more months in the Bahamas, and then succumbed to the combination of a lung infection and a diabetic seizure. Amara is convinced that her father did not die of his cancer—she said an autopsy shows the tumor to have been in remission at the time of his death.

Since her father's death, Amara and her husband have become Dr. Burton's assistants, helping run the Bahamian clinic and "pulling" blood for the testing program. "I really believe he's achieved a breakthrough in the treatment of cancer," she said. Amara noted that a patient undergoing Burton's therapy "is not made even more sick by the treatment itself. They actually feel better."

Ironically, Burton is on the verge of achieving one form of cancer establishment recognition, but it's not for his direct patient treatment. Burton's serum has been proven to be adaptable for a highly-accurate cancer detection test. Reached by telephone at his clinic in the Bahamas, Burton confirmed that he had signed a deal with McPath, a highly-respected medical testing lab based in New Jersey, to market the blood test before the first of the year. The new system could revolutionize cancer testing—it is evidently able to pinpoint not only existing malignancies but also developing malignancies.

Despite articles in *Penthouse*, a whole chapter devoted to his work in the *Mass* book, and a 60 *Minutes* segment, Burton is convinced that the publicity won't help his cause. "It won't mean a thing. This is a ripple on a lake, and there's a big wind going to blow the other way."

The "big wind" Burton was referring to is

A Guide to Cancer Therapies

Marion Morra is the Communications Director of the Comprehensive Cancer Center in New Haven; her sister, Eve Potts, has been trained as a medical writer. Combining their knowledge and skills the two middle-aged women have recently completed *Choices*, a mammoth handbook on realistic alternatives in cancer treatment. The book's style—a straightforward question and answer format—reflects its intention: you, as a cancer patient, are a consumer and therefore entitled to probe the medical establishment with the same energy, curiosity and concern which you might use buying a new car. "Ask, ask, ask and ask again," write Morra and Potts, "and don't be put off by medical jargon or a doctor who doesn't want to talk."

If you don't know how to ask, *Choices*, posing thousands of questions related to all aspects of cancer, will help you articulate your anxieties. "It [cancer] is a morbid subject, yes," admits Morra, "but the book is intended to inspire, not depress; to encourage people not to feel

helpless, impotent, not to get on a treadmill leaving everything up to the doctor, but to get in there and become a part of the whole thing and so, exercise some control over their illness."

"It really is unbelievable," says Potts, "but the very same people who can be so forceful in their daily lives end up in a hospital, helpless and pliant. We [society] have made doctors into deities."

Morra and Potts were inspired to write their book three years ago when they realized that their good friend, a victim of lung cancer, spent anxious days uninformed about symptoms she developed.

"Now, maybe her doctor did in fact explain things to her," said Potts, "but even when a doctor does tell you things you don't always listen very well or remember everything. A cancer patient is, understandably, very scared."

The need for a comprehensive body of readable information (there are reams of cancer information directed at the medical profession) was confirmed by the

eagerness with which the Avon publishing company immediately bought *Choices* after Potts and Morra submitted a table of contents and one chapter. "A telephone information service," says Morra, "is one way in which to get answers to your questions concerning cancer, but using the telephone is different from having a concrete book in your hand. Then too, some people are very verbal, but others aren't and it's easier for them to read than to talk."

Choices is intended not only for the cancer patient but for families of the patient as well, for those who don't get to go to the doctor and ask about their concerns but who nevertheless live with cancer day after day.

Morra and Potts maintain they tried to be objective throughout their book, believing that people have the right to gain access to all information on cancer including information about treatments and methods not approved by the established medical profession. Thus their book includes a chapter with the names and addresses of all places that offer help to cancer patients. What the authors don't include are statistics. "If you're going to be in the 20 percent category of those who live, or in the category of those who die—that's the way it is," says Potts. "But we weren't focusing on that. Given the life you have, what you can do with it was our orientation."

"I think finding out the causes of cancer is very important, preventing it even more important," says Morra. "But you also have to deal with the thousands of people who already have it. We sense people wanting to live, to take advantage of the time they have left to live—and we wrote the book to help these people."

It's a book which contains, as Potts phrases it, "everything you hoped you'd never have to know." But given the fact that cancer is a reality about which people do need to know, *Choices* is invaluable.

Susan Buchsbaum

Eve Potts and Marion Morra, authors of *Choices*. (Virginia Blaisdell photo)

