


PROFESSOR JANE PLANT



YOUR LIFE
IN YOUR
HANDS

UNDERSTANDING, PREVENTING AND
OVERCOMING BREAST CANCER

The statistics are terrifying: approaching one in ten British women will get breast cancer. In parts of the US, it's one in eight. Virtually no one in the West can escape its devastating effect.

Professor Jane Plant, CBE, one of Britain's most eminent scientists, contracted breast cancer in 1987. She had five recurrences of the disease, which, by 1993, had spread to her lymph system.

Jane's profession has led to her working all over the world; it was partly her knowledge of other cultures as well as her own scientific understanding that led her to an amazing discovery. Not only did she stop her tumour from growing – it began to shrink.

She finally defeated her breast cancer because she used her training and knowledge as a natural scientist to understand it – and overcome it.

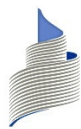
This book will show you, by the author's example and through her scientific knowledge, simple changes that we can all make in our day-to-day lives to help prevent or treat breast cancer.

And this isn't something that she has achieved for herself alone. Employing her knowledge alongside traditional medical treatments, Jane has used her programme to help over 65 other women successfully fight breast cancer.

With a clear statement of the scientific background to her amazing discovery, suggestions for ways to alter your diet to combat breast cancer, and a detailed menu with recipes to help you make the change, *YOUR LIFE IN YOUR HANDS* is a truly revolutionary book, and one destined to change the lives of millions of people.

£16.99





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YOUR LIFE IN YOUR HANDS

Understanding, Preventing and
Overcoming Breast Cancer

Professor Jane A. Plant

Virgin

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*For my children Mark, Emma
and Thomas*

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Author's Note

The diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions is a responsibility shared between you and your medical advisors. All diets should begin with a medical check-up to make certain that no special health problems exist and to confirm that there are no medical reasons why you should not undertake a change of diet.

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Welcome

This book has come about as a result of many hundreds of conversations I have had with women who want answers.

Breast cancer is a puzzling, and frightening, subject. As someone who has suffered five times from progressively more advanced breast cancer, which eventually spread to my lymph system before it was finally defeated, I know from first-hand experience just how terrifying it can be. But let me just say, straight away, that although breast cancer is a subject that frightens many women, this is *not* a frightening book. Quite the opposite, in fact: it is empowering and optimistic. It is a story of hope.

Over the past century, Western women have achieved extraordinary progress in a great many areas. We now have the power to vote for our governance, the methods to plan our families and to ensure that a high proportion of our children survive, and we can be educated in any subject we choose alongside men. Despite all these impressive and valuable gains, today's 'epidemic' of breast cancer now jeopardises our well-being, assaults the very symbols of our femininity and motherhood and indeed menaces our lives as few other threats do.

The facts are stark and shocking. For adult women (aged between 25 and 75) the leading cause of death is cancer¹: and the type of cancer that kills most women is breast cancer.² Out of about every ten women you know, one of them (hopefully, not you) is likely to contract breast cancer.³ These dry statistics actually understate the severity of the situation, because breast cancer affects the lives of far more people than that: when you include all the spouses, sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, friends, colleagues and loved ones whose lives are blighted by

this disease, then you begin to realise just what a modern-day scourge we are dealing with. In fact, almost no one in the Western world can consider themselves immune from its impact. Indeed, our increasing affluence appears to make matters worse. Most diseases affect the poorer rather than the wealthier, more-educated members of society, but breast and prostate cancer are different. They mainly affect the higher socio-economic groups.⁴ Indeed, the slang name for breast cancer in China translates as 'Rich Woman's Disease' as it mainly attacks women who follow a Western middle-class lifestyle.

For too long women have unquestioningly accepted that a proportion of us will be affected by breast cancer. We have been persuaded to be too passive about prevention and agreed that there is little or nothing we can do ourselves to prevent a disease that, quite literally, decimates the female population. And the overwhelming majority of our medical, scientific, political and financial efforts are directed towards detecting and treating, rather than preventing, this awful disease.

The message you'll read in these pages is very different.

I believe that all women have the right to the best available information so that they can make informed decisions for themselves. My aim in this book is to set before you, clearly and plainly, vital information which can help you to drastically cut your risk of contracting – and dying from – breast cancer. One of the frustrations for most women is not knowing how to help themselves. We know that if we smoke we increase our risk of lung cancer and if we sunbathe too much, we increase our risk of skin cancer, so we can choose whether to take these risks. But in the case of breast cancer, we are too often made to feel helpless because we are rarely told about anything we can actually do to protect ourselves. Although we are told of many risk factors for breast cancer, they do not translate into anything we can actually do. This makes us feel powerless.

For the first time, this book makes available to all women a compelling body of new evidence which points to the underlying causes of breast cancer. It is my hope that women will use this information to prevent or treat this disease in themselves or those close to them. Beyond this, there is much useful information gleaned from my own personal experience on the very practical aspects of dealing with the disease, including diagnosis and treatment. In addition, I have observed in m

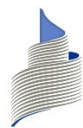
research that much of the data and information about prostate cancer leads to conclusions similar to those regarding the cause and treatment of breast cancer. Anticipating the care that the women who read this will extend to the men in their lives, I have included much about prostate cancer. You will also find suggestions on how, by changing values and behaviour patterns aimed at improving the environment, we can reduce our exposure as a society to some of the factors which may contribute to these diseases.

This book chronicles, in part, my journey through five progressively worse episodes of breast cancer and describes how I used my training as a scientist to cope with both the disease and the treatments I was given for it. That scientific training had taught me to observe and record everything, to root out every fragment of information and to sift the relevant from the irrelevant, the rational from the irrational, and to keep asking those two key questions that are at the very heart of science: why and how? This book contains what I believe to be the answers to those two questions regarding breast cancer.

If this book had been around even two years before my first diagnosis of breast cancer, I am sure that I would never have had the disease. I hope very much that you can put the information it contains to the best possible use in your life.

Sincerely,

Jane A. Plant, CBE, BSc, PhD, D Univ,
FIMM, C Eng, FGS, C Geol
London



1 The Hat, The Boa Constrictor and The Scientist

In this chapter I explain to you why, as a natural scientist, my approach to the problem of breast cancer is so different to that of doctors and orthodox medical researchers. I then go on to explain how I used my training and experience to cope with all of the orthodox types of treatment a breast cancer patient is likely to undergo, including surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. I explain the treatments clearly and simply and give lots of practical tips to help you cope, for example, to avoid or minimise hair loss during chemotherapy. In this chapter I have tried to make you feel as if you have a good and caring friend guiding you towards the light at the end of the tunnel.

Scientists can often seem to be rather strange people.

The truth is, scientists are different – we're trained to be. Let me explain what I mean by using the story I tell when I first lecture to new students at one of the universities I visit. It comes from a wonderful children's story you may already be familiar with: *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. In this magical book the little prince draws a picture of a boa constrictor digesting an elephant. But when he shows his masterpiece to grown-ups and asks them whether they are frightened by the picture, they ask why they should be frightened by a picture of a hat. It is the ability to see that the hat is a boa constrictor digesting an elephant that distinguishes the best scientists.

I pondered deeply, then, over the adventures of the jungle. And after some work with a coloured pencil I succeeded in making my first drawing. My drawing Number One. It looked like this:



TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE

This book is unlike any other written on the subject of breast cancer. It is aimed at equipping women to deal with their disease effectively, and informs them how best to direct their efforts in preventing and treating breast cancer by minimising their own personal risk.

**'Jane Plant is a well-known and highly respected scientist . . .
her story is astonishing and fascinating'**
LORD OXBURGH, RECTOR OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE

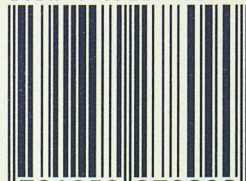
It is also the personal journey of a woman who not only overcame her own cancer but has achieved equal success with other women she has helped.

**'Jane Plant is an extraordinarily clever, resilient and
courageous woman . . . a scientist of the highest calibre'**
PROFESSOR JOHN DEWEY, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Her message – that breast cancer can be prevented and treated effectively by simple diet and lifestyle modification – will change the way doctors and scientists think about this disease

AND CHANGE YOUR LIFE FOREVER.

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