

Redefining Healing – A Holistic Approach to Cancer Care and Whole-Body Wellness

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STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › Dr. Leigh Erin Connealy, founder of the Cancer Center for Healing, shared in an interview her holistic approach to cancer prevention, early detection, and integrative therapies for lifelong wellness
- › The U.S. faces a worsening cancer burden alongside declining life expectancy, with rising chronic disease, childhood illness, and mental health issues intensifying overall cancer risk
- › Cancer incidence has risen 80% since 1990, with aggressive cases now appearing more often in younger adults, highlighting the need for proactive, individualized prevention and monitoring
- › Integrative therapies combine nutrient-dense ancestral diets, targeted supplementation, detoxification, oxygen-based treatments, and advanced biophysical modalities to strengthen defenses and create an internal environment less favorable to disease
- › Lifelong wellness is built on intentional daily habits, including quality sleep, movement, nature exposure, and emotional balance. It's important to start these habits even before conception to benefit future generations

Health is shaped by more than the absence of disease. It reflects how your body performs each day, how effectively it repairs and recovers, and how well daily habits nourish its needs. In many ways, modern life often undermines these foundations.

Holistic healing responds to this reality by addressing the whole picture — the physical, mental, and environmental influences that determine long-term well-being.

Dr. Leigh Erin Connealy, founder of the Cancer Center for Healing and the Center for New Medicine in Irvine, California, and a physician with more than 30 years of experience in integrative medicine, explored these principles in an interview with Brittany and Anthony Xavier on “The Long Game.” In the featured video above, she shared her perspectives on prevention, longevity, and practical measures that support lasting health.¹

The Worsening State of Health in the US

The United States faces a deepening health crisis despite investing more in medical care per person than any other nation. By almost every measure of population health — from life expectancy to rates of chronic disease and mental illness — the trend lines are moving in the wrong direction.²

- **Poor global ranking despite high spending** — According to Connealy, the U.S. ranked 69th in global healthcare performance in 2024, a position that reflects an overall decline in outcomes even as technology and treatment capabilities advance. Life expectancy has fallen for three consecutive years, underscoring the scale and persistence of the problem.
- **This decline is not limited to older adults** — Chronic conditions are emerging earlier in life. Connealy notes that autism in California is now diagnosed in one out of every 22 children, while in other states the rate is one in 35. Diabetes affects one in three children, a condition once considered rare in this age group. By the time they reach elementary school, 60% of young kids have at least one chronic illness.
- **Mental health in young people is also deteriorating** — Teenagers are now experiencing the highest recorded rates of anxiety and depression, and suicide has become a leading cause of death in this age group. Emotional health is inseparably linked to physical health, and the decline in both is creating a generation at greater risk for lifelong health struggles.

For a deeper look at how unaddressed underlying factors drive these patterns, see [“The Cost of Ignoring the Root Cause of Chronic Disease.”](#)

Cancer Is Striking Younger — Early Detection Must Go Beyond Standard Tests

Cancer develops silently over many years before it is formally diagnosed, progressing quietly without obvious symptoms. By the time most cancers are found, they have been growing, changing, and interacting with the body’s systems for a significant period.³

- **Rising rates in younger adults** — Between 1990 and 2019, there has been an 80% increase in cancer cases. Connealy notes that many of her new patients are in their 20s, 30s, and early 40s. These include advanced-stage diagnoses, such as Stage 4 colon cancer, which were once considered rare in these age groups. The shift challenges the long-standing view of cancer as a disease that primarily affects older individuals.
- **Addressing cancer begins long before the moment of diagnosis** — According to Connealy, she looks at the full span of a patient’s life in the years leading up to their illness to assemble a complete picture of the patient’s physical and environmental landscape during the period in which cancer is most likely to have begun. As she explains:

“There are some things I go through when I see a patient. I go back from inception to where they are right now, and everything that’s happened to them, meaning not just how they sleep, the water they drink, the food they eat, the exercise they do or don’t do, their mouth, and their stress over the last 8 to 10 years. So, I know everything about them. So, I’m trying to figure out all the things that contributed to the development because nothing is just one thing.”⁴

- **Comprehensive early detection strategy** — To identify cancer as early as possible and understand the factors influencing its development, Connealy uses a range of advanced diagnostic tools. These methods go beyond standard protocols and are selected to provide a comprehensive view of a patient's health from multiple angles, including:⁵
 - **Advanced blood testing** — Measures inflammation, hormone balance, nutrient levels, and other internal markers that indicate cancer risk or progression.
 - **Circulating tumor cell testing** — Detects cancer activity in the blood before tumors become visible, using specialized international labs.
 - **Whole-body MRI** — Scans for solid tumors and abnormalities without radiation exposure, providing a broad view of the body.
 - **Thermography and ultrasound** — Identifies abnormal vascular patterns and tissue changes, especially useful for dense breast tissue.
 - **Nutritional and toxic load analysis** — Evaluates nutrient status and toxic elements inside cells to identify imbalances that may influence cancer risk.
 - **Energy and frequency assessments** — Uses noninvasive scanning to detect disruptions in the body's electrical and energetic systems.
- **Risk-specific screening is another hallmark of her approach** — Testing recommendations are tailored based on a patient's genetics, family history, and existing conditions. The intention is to apply the most appropriate and least invasive methods for each individual's risk profile.

By combining a detailed life history, advanced laboratory and imaging technologies, and personalized screening protocols, Connealy builds a multifaceted view of each patient's cancer risk and current health status. This thorough and individualized approach is designed to both detect disease earlier and provide the necessary information for developing a targeted, patient-specific management plan.

Integrative Therapies for Cancer Care and Prevention

In the interview, Connealy outlines a prevention and treatment approach that combines nutritional, detoxification, oxygenation, and other advanced therapies. Each strategy is tailored to the individual and designed to strengthen the body's defenses, remove harmful influences, and create an internal environment less favorable to disease.⁶

- **Personalized nutrition plans** — Connealy emphasizes the role of food as a foundation for both cancer prevention and supportive care during treatment. In the interview, she stressed the importance of creating daily conditions that promote recovery and resilience, starting with diet.

“You need to really think about your food. You need to eat nutrient-dense food. And really, you eat like your ancestors ate,” she noted. She advises avoiding harmful fats such as seed oils, eliminating refined sugar, and choosing nutrient-dense options like high-quality protein, organic fruits and vegetables, and raw dairy from reliable sources.

- **Targeted supplementation** — Supplement choices follow what shows up in labs and history. Intravenous vitamin C is at the center of her protocol, used daily and in higher doses when needed. She recommends camu camu as a valuable whole-food source of this nutrient, particularly suited for younger individuals. Connealy also discusses progesterone as part of a presurgical protocol for women:

“Like a woman who's going to have breast surgery, for example, the higher your progesterone, the better outcome you have for the surgery ... If they're young, you want them to do it in their luteal phase, which is their peak time before their menstrual cycle.”⁷

Learn more about how to supplement with progesterone in [“What You Need to Know About Estrogen and Serotonin.”](#)

- **Detoxification therapies** — Reducing your body's toxic burden supports immunity and mitochondrial function. Connealy suggests simple at-home practices such as Epsom salt and baking soda baths, sometimes combined with clay, to encourage relaxation and assist detoxification.

She also recommends using an infrared sauna when available. If you've been following my work, you know I advocate for this as well — learn more in [“Your Complete Guide to Detoxing Heavy Metals Naturally and Boosting Vitality.”](#)

- **Oxygen-based treatments** — Connealy uses ozone to raise tissue oxygen delivery and reduce microbial stress, and incorporates hyperbaric oxygen therapy where appropriate to increase dissolved oxygen in plasma. These methods support energy production and recovery while other parts of the plan address nutrition, toxins, and infections.
- **Physical and biophysical therapies** — She also shares that she uses [pulsed electromagnetic field](#) (PEMF) therapy to stimulate cellular repair and promote energy production. Moreover, she uses intravascular laser therapy with different wavelengths to influence mitochondrial activity and blood properties from within the vasculature, and full-body red-light beds for broad [photobiomodulation](#).

Learn more about these methods and other therapeutic approaches by visiting the Cancer Center for Healing's Integrative Cancer Treatment page.⁸

Building Lifelong Wellness at Home Through Daily Lifestyle Habits

Daily decision-making is a central driver of long-term health. Connealy describes self-care as a continuous process rather than an occasional effort, and she links preventive strategies to the years before illness develops, extending even to the period before conception.⁹

- **Building a strong health foundation before pregnancy** — Optimizing the health of both parents prior to conception influences the health of future children. Beyond that stage, she advises patients to take an active role in their medical decisions, ask questions, and work with practitioners who tailor recommendations to each individual's history and needs.
- **Mental and emotional habits as part of healing** — Emotional well-being is just as important as physical health. Thus, mindset practices are essential in both prevention and recovery plans. Affirmations before sleep help reinforce constructive beliefs at a subconscious level, while beginning the day with gratitude and intention sets a stable tone. Introducing your children to daily meditation for 10 to 15 minutes also helps calm their minds, improve focus, and support emotional regulation.
- **Excellence over perfectionism** — Connealy advises aiming for steady, sustainable progress rather than holding to rigid standards. Having a clear sense of purpose, personal values, and inner stability helps you maintain perspective and guide your decision-making during challenging times.
- **Modeling healthy habits for children** — Lead your children by example when teaching healthy behaviors. Explaining the reasons behind such choices helps them understand their value and encourages them to make informed decisions on their own.
- **Prioritizing daily movement and time outdoors** — Regular exposure to natural light, fresh air, and physical activity helps regulate sleep, elevate mood, and support physical development. Making these elements part of the family's daily rhythm turns them into reliable, lasting habits.

By making these practices a consistent part of daily life, you create conditions where health is continually supported.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About Holistic Cancer Prevention and Wellness

Q: How can I tell if I'm at risk for cancer before I have symptoms?

A: Cancer often develops silently for years before diagnosis. Dr. Connealy advises getting advanced screening that looks beyond standard tests. Options include circulating tumor cell testing, whole-body MRI, thermography, and specialized blood panels that check for inflammation, hormone balance, nutrient status, and toxin exposure.

Q: Can nutrition really make a difference in cancer prevention and recovery?

A: Yes. Nutrient-dense, whole foods strengthen the immune system, support repair processes, and improve energy metabolism. Avoiding harmful fats like seed oils, eliminating refined sugar, and choosing high-quality protein, organic produce, and raw dairy from trusted sources are key steps.

Q: How do detox therapies like infrared sauna and Epsom salt baths help with healing?

A: These therapies promote relaxation, improve circulation, and support the removal of toxins through sweat and skin pathways. Adding clay to baths may further assist in binding impurities.

Q: What lifestyle changes should I make before getting pregnant to give my child the best start?

A: Improving nutrition, reducing toxin exposure, balancing hormones, and managing stress before conception benefits both parents and sets a healthier foundation for the child.

Q: What's the best way to get my children involved in healthy routines?

A: Leading by example is most effective — modeling good eating habits, regular physical activity, and mindfulness. Explaining the reasons behind these habits helps children value and maintain them.

Sources and References

- ^{1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9} [Brittany Xavier, "Redefining Healing: Dr. Leigh Erin Connealy's Holistic Insights on Cancer and Wellness," January 23, 2025](#)
- ⁵ [Cancer Center for Healing, Cancer Diagnostics](#)
- ⁸ [Cancer Center for Healing, Cancer Treatments](#)