



Riordan  
Clinic

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Riordan Clinic is a world-renowned, academic medical center that has led the world in integrative oncology and complex chronic illness care since 1975. The Riordan Clinic was established as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization with missions in research, provider education, and patient education. The Health Hunter Newsletter has been published since 1986 as an educational resource to providers and patients.



## Avoid Toxins to Reduce Cancer Risk



**AUTHOR**

**Dr. Lucas Tims, ND,  
FABNO**

Through the work of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and others, there are comprehensive lists of known carcinogens. [1] The IARC organizes its list into four categories, though I recommend paying the most attention to Group 1, known carcinogens, and Group 2, probable carcinogens.

There are more than 200 toxins combined in Groups 1 and 2, which can be intimidating.

Those include well-known and widely discussed toxins that we frequently see in

patients at the Riordan Clinic, including mold, heavy metals, plastic chemicals, and pesticides. Even some of the pharmaceuticals used to treat cancer can be carcinogenic. [1] However, it is important to know that while everyone is exposed to toxins, to an extent, not everyone will develop cancer as a result.

Every cell in our body can become cancerous if presented with the right – or perhaps wrong – conditions. Toxicity is one of 10 terrains that can contribute to cells becoming cancerous. But what I have found in my own experience with patients, talking with other doctors, and available research, most of my patients will test positive for exposure to one or more toxins and more than one of the other 10 terrains. [2]

*Continued on page 2*

## How Do Our Bodies Process Toxins?

Our bodies are designed to deal with a certain amount of toxin exposure. We have built-in, natural filtration systems, such as our liver, kidneys, lymphatic system, and sweat, which can move some of the toxins out and prevent them from building up to the point that they cause a problem. [3] However, if these systems become overloaded or stagnant, toxins can build up and create disease. While there are different methods to test for toxins in the body, urine tests are most common and, in my experience, are the most reliable as you can look at not only active exposures but past as well.

Every individual is different. That is also true with cancer. In my practice, I have not seen trends for a level of exposure or causation that can definitively be linked to a type of cancer. We do see a lot of mold and pesticide toxicity at the Riordan Clinic, which would be expected considering the specific environment. During my practice in Arizona, we didn't see much mold.

However, after moving to a more humid climate in the Midwest, it is one of the most common toxins I see in patients. That is true of pesticides, one of the most well-known being glyphosate, because of the agricultural emphasis in this region. What I can tell, anecdotally, is that it is hard to predict which toxins I will find in which patients, even with the same cancer types.

## Addressing Toxins

If lab results show toxins, I initially want to understand if the exposure is current and active or if it is from an ongoing source that

has built up over time and is more consolidated and persisting in the body. Then we can move toward addressing it for that individual.

To borrow a phrase from Riordan Clinic Board Member Dr. Thomas Levy, MD, JD, "It's hard to dry off when you are still standing in the shower." Addressing toxins and removing as much exposure as possible is the next step. Sometimes initial testing will show there is a toxicity in the body, but we might not know the complete picture. We may get a hint there is a problem, but it isn't until we start detoxing an individual and retest after a few months that we know the full extent of the problem.



It is sometimes hard to predict how long it will take an individual to detox. We all have different makeup regarding how our bodies process toxins, and genetics can have an impact. It is not unusual for it to take 6 to 12 months to get a significant toxic load completely out of the body.

## Tips for Reducing Exposure

If an individual has an active exposure, we want to get them out of that environment, if possible. Then we look at initiating protocols that can help their body detox. If leaving an environment, such as moving away from an agricultural area, isn't possible, I recommend other actions to minimize exposure.

For example, avoid grains and GMO-type crops. Buying organic is really important, and growing your own is even better.

Many toxins, including heavy metals and pesticides, have found their way into the



water, so filtering is important. [4] If mold is present in the home, remediate it as soon as possible.

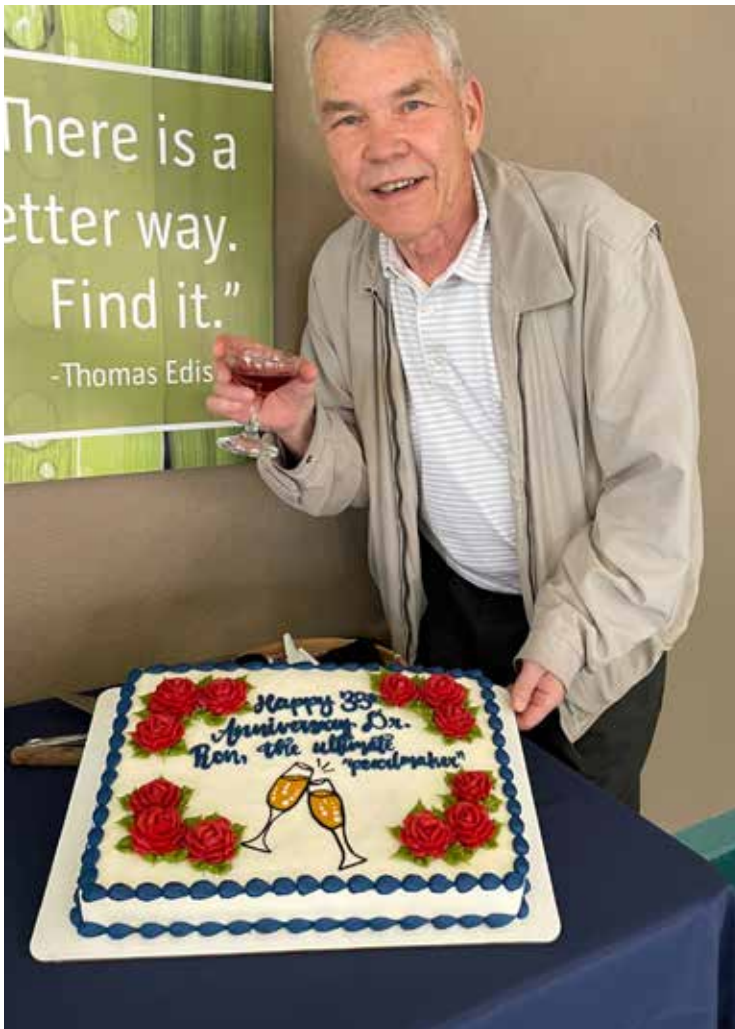
For other types of chemicals, use air filters and keep the ductwork clean in your home. Be mindful of chemicals in items such as beauty products, household cleaners, non-stick cookware, and plastic containers. These things have made their way into our lives because of modern convenience and corporate marketing, but we don't need them to live. There are many safer options when it comes to food storage and personal and beauty care products. I often send people to the Environmental Working Group for guidance. [5]

## Closing Thoughts

Although I would always like to see more clinical data, I can say anecdotally after working with thousands of patients in detox protocols, I have absolutely seen that when toxicities are addressed, patients do better with their cancer. We see better outcomes, better responses to treatments, and fewer recurrences.

## RESOURCES

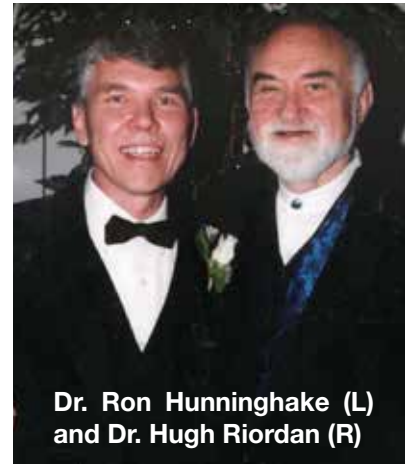
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# Riordan Clinic Celebrates Dr. Ron's 35th Anniversary

The Riordan Clinic's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Ron Hunninghake, MD, marked his 35th anniversary with the clinic on January 13. The clinic staff celebrated with a special reception.

During his tenure at the Riordan Clinic, Dr. Ron – as he is known to patients and staff – worked with clinic co-founder Dr. Hugh Riordan, MD, and has seen many changes through the years.



**Dr. Ron Hunninghake (L) and Dr. Hugh Riordan (R)**

In a recent episode of the Real Health Podcast, Dr. Ron reflects on the past 35 years. He speaks about the experience and value of being a co-learner along with his patients and the Riordan Clinic's approach to care. He also discusses what it was like to work with Dr. Riordan and how he and the clinic staff carried on after Dr. Riordan's death in 2005.

See page 8 for more information about the podcast. You can watch the video, listen to the podcast, or read the transcript at [realhealthpodcast.org](https://realhealthpodcast.org).

# Maintain a Healthy Metabolism to Prevent Cancer



**AUTHOR**

**Dr. Ron Hunninghake, MD, CMO**

When it comes to cancer prevention, improved awareness of the risk factors that promote metabolic dysfunction may help alert you to take decisive action to ward off the disease before it has a chance to start. The first step is to learn how often unnoticed changes to your metabolism set the stage for the emergence of cancer cells.

Metabolism is your body's ability to generate cellular energy; virtually everything your body does requires energy. In the early 20th century, researcher Otto Warburg discovered that if healthy cells don't get enough oxygen, they shift into a more primitive, "backup" metabolism called glycolysis. In this state, injured cells start to burn glucose without oxygen. [1]

## Understanding Cellular Energy

Glycolysis is an inefficient metabolic pathway that rapidly and recklessly burns calories to generate large amounts of ATP, which is the energy currency of our cells. This sinister process is known as the Warburg Effect, which characterizes how cancer cells derive their huge energy requirements to support their rapid and destructive growth. [1]

Cancer's disruption of the cells' energy production process is also known as fermentation, which creates tremendous acidity in the body resulting in cachexia. Cachexia is responsible for severe weight loss and debilitating fatigue in cancer patients. [2] Over time, cancer patients are subject to mood disorders, depression, and chronic inflammation. Results can also include a reduction or imbalance of hormones and a negative impact on detoxification pathways. In general, the metabolic "terrain" of the body becomes seriously disrupted and dysfunctional.

I compare it to a car engine going seriously out of tune. The tailpipe exhaust is black and foreboding. The car's performance deteriorates, barely able to clunk along. This metabolic dysfunctional state creates a favorable environment for cancer cells to grow. And like the out-of-tune car, the emerging cancer patient's energy and zest for life severely lags!

A cancer cell is really a wounded cell. Or, more precisely, the environment of the cancer has been significantly damaged or "wounded." In the book *The Metabolic Approach to Cancer*, authors Dr. Nasha Winter, ND, LAc, FABNO, and Jess Higgins Kelley, MNT, ONC, outline 10 metabolic categories they call terrains. This approach to cancer identifies more than 100 mini-wounds, approximately 10 in each category, that over time create a big enough impact on whatever organ is the weak link. [3]

While it is true that some individuals may have a genetic predisposition to cancer, *The Metabolic Approach to Cancer* explains that cancer is the outcome of sick terrains in the body. The result is that our organ systems begin to breakdown



metabolically. In an effort to survive and heal, paradoxically, the injured cell becomes cancerous.

Cancer isn't necessarily a built-in genetic time bomb that we inherit from our parents. More often, there is a predisposition to the disease due to environmental risk factors in our upbringing. In other words, the lifestyle behaviors and environmental preferences we learned from our parents impact our genetic expression more than the genes themselves. Cancer is metabolically epigenetic, much more than it is genetic.

For example, if a woman carries the BRCA gene and she makes wise lifestyle choices, she may never "express" the BRCA gene and never develop breast cancer. However, significant metabolic dysfunction resulting from poor environmental factors, lousy food choices, high glucose levels, extreme stressors, lack of human support, and a host of other life circumstances ... well, all of these together could "wake up" this gene, setting the stage for cancer.

## Pay Attention to Metabolic Factors

When it comes to using a metabolic approach to preventing cancer, awareness is key. If you aren't aware of your metabolic issues and the metabolic factors that contribute to cancer, you are already at risk.

A good example of this as listed in *The Metabolic Approach to Cancer* is epigenetics, which is the effect of your environment on your genetic expression. While it isn't possible to control everything in our environment, we can be intentional about the choices we can control. For example, work on good

glucose control, get adequate sleep, avoid environmental toxins when possible, and limit stress, among others.

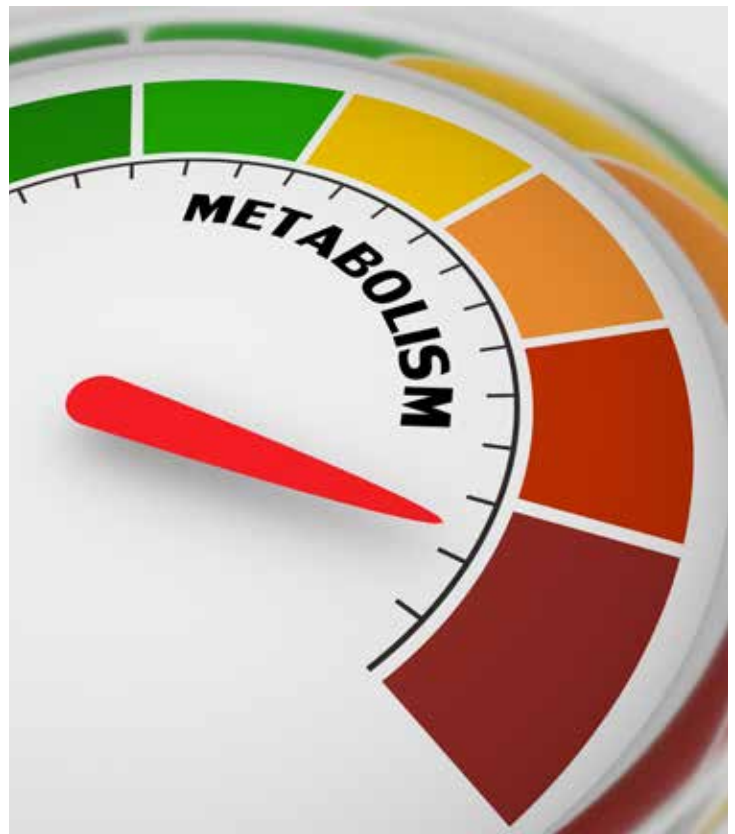
In the book, Dr. Nasha Winters and Jess Higgins Kelley developed a 10-item checklist for each of the 10 terrains. Readers then tally the number of “yes” answers and use these as “risk areas” that can be mitigated with lifestyle interventions. You can read more in their book to learn how to specifically address these high-risk areas that are personally relevant to you. [3]

We are all busy trying to make a living, and it is easy to be distracted. However, deciding to take time to be aware of and focus on metabolic wellness may help avoid cancer in the first place. The bottom line is that this is a fundamental life decision to take better care of yourself to prevent what would seem to be the long-term, unlikely consequence of cancer. Long-term, that is, until it happens to you.

**Fact:** 1 in 2 people will get cancer in their lifetime. [4]

#### RESOURCES

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# Cancer Survivor Makes Changes For Better Health



**AUTHOR**

Melody Spurney

As a busy mortgage loan officer, Lori Caldwell loves to work, and in early 2022, low mortgage rates kept her especially busy. So when she found a lump in her right breast, she said it took her a while to get it checked out.

“I didn’t take too much time for my health. I regret that now. It will never happen again. My health comes first,” she said.

Lori, 56, of Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri, was diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer in February 2022. It was her second cancer diagnosis, having survived stage 3 melanoma in 2011. Lori had a lumpectomy and removal of seven lymph nodes in March.

She got an infection in April, which she said was initially ignored by her medical providers for nearly a week. Finally, it became so severe that she wound up in the Emergency Room in sepsis protocol.

She was starting to feel better by summer and then got shingles.

“I was suffering. I really couldn’t start my real health journey until I got through that,” she said.

She knew she did not want to do the conventional radiation treatments or Tamoxifen, which her oncologist recommended. Instead, she started asking questions about holistic options.

She recalled telling her doctor, “You can preach big pharma to me, but I ain’t gonna do it.”

She said her oncologist told her “there is a place out in Kansas” but wouldn’t tell her the name. She eventually identified the Riordan Clinic and went to Overland Park in June with her boss, who was also facing a cancer diagnosis.

Laura A. Stauffer, MSN, APRN, NP-C, is Lori’s provider. She began Lori’s treatment with blood work and additional testing in the clinic’s Oncology Profile to get a baseline for her treatment plan. Lori said that the blood work and results were a pivotal part of her treatment at the Riordan Clinic.

“Who doesn’t want to know what is going on in their body? How cool is that? And knowing each and every thing that I have to work on and what to do about it,” she said.

She said that tests revealed high mold levels, and although a specific cause isn’t determined, Lori and Laura suspect wine or Lori’s CPAP machine may have caused it. Lori said they also are addressing high cholesterol and blood pressure, elevated calcium, a fatty liver, and low vitamin D.

Laura said she also worked with Lori to detox her body, reduce inflammation, and stabilize her blood sugar to help get her immune system on the right track.

Lori’s treatment plan included high-dose vitamin C, ozone therapy,

mistletoe injections, and treatment for low vitamin D, which Laura said is common in breast cancer patients.

Her health journey also included learning about the terrains that can influence cancer. Lori said stress from her job, lack of exercise, and too much wine probably contributed to her cancer.

“A lot of the factors that play into getting cancer are the factors I have. My lifestyle was work, work, work. Sit at a desk all day. Go home. Grab a glass of wine. Eat dinner and go to bed. That’s not the healthiest lifestyle,” she said.

During a visit to the clinic, Lori met another cancer patient who is also in the mortgage business. After swapping stories about their profession and related stress, Lori said, “Maybe we should get a different job.”

**“YOU ONLY HAVE ONE BODY,  
AND IT IS IMPORTANT.”**

**– LORI CALDWELL,  
BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR**

## Making Changes

Rather than getting a different job, Lori made other lifestyle changes as a result of her treatment plan and what she learned from Laura. Lori took diligent notes during her treatment visits and said she has tried to follow much of Laura’s advice.

“I like it when people do what I ask them to do when it comes to loans, and I try to do that in return,” she said.

She says she has addressed her sleep apnea, cut back on wine, focuses on healthy food and losing weight, takes supplements, and goes to the gym five days a week. She said that transitioning to healthy food wasn’t especially hard because she loves to cook and already ate a relatively healthy diet.

She is motivated to improve her liver by reducing alcohol. She said she sometimes lacks motivation for the gym, but her husband,





**Pictured above:** Riordan Clinic patient Lori Caldwell with her husband, Brian.

**Pictured on page 6:** Lori and Brian's son, Eric, and his fiancée, Kelly Johnston.

Brian, enjoys fitness and encourages her.

"Who listens to their husband, really? But I know he's right," she joked about her husband of 26 years. Lori now has developed a routine of a treadmill and strength training session on days she works out. "I just have to stay committed," she said.

Lori has additional motivation to improve her health. Her son Eric, 24, is engaged to be married.

"I don't have grandbabies yet, but I want to have enough energy to run around with them when I do. I don't want to be some old, decrepit grandma that can't get around and do anything," she said.

Lori considers herself cancer-free after her most recent blood work showed no circulating cancer cells.

"I'm never going to have cancer again. I am going to do everything I can to stay cancer-free," she said.

However, she is reflective about her

experience with the disease. "I'm glad I got cancer. It really opened my eyes to a lot of things," she said.

Lori has enjoyed her experience with the Riordan Clinic and said she loves talking to Laura and the help of the clinic staff. She plans to continue to see Laura several times a year for blood work, which she considers a crucial part of her health journey.

"It is important to fine-tune your body and take care of it," she said.

In addition to referring her boss to Riordan Clinic, she has also referred friends and others. Although she does see obstacles for some, including expense since insurance does not cover treatments, and the fact that she said people are lazy and don't want to put effort into fixing their bodies.

It is laziness that Lori doesn't understand. She said she sees so much value in knowing what is going on in her body and what action she can take to fix it.

"You only have one body, and it's important," she said.

## Contact the Editor

Please send any comments or suggestions to

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Thank you for reading.



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# Keto Avocado Chocolate Mousse



## INGREDIENTS

Flesh of 1 avocado  
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
1/3 cup Erythritol or 6 pitted Medjool dates (if paleo, not sugar-free)  
1 1/4 cup canned coconut cream  
1 tsp vanilla extract

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 10 minutes, plus chilling

Servings: 4-6 ramekins

## DIRECTIONS

1. In a blender, scoop out the ripe avocado flesh, unsweetened cocoa powder, sugar-free crystal sweetener (or pitted dates), canned coconut cream, and vanilla extract.
2. Blend until smooth, about 1 minute on high speed.
3. Transfer the chocolate mousse into ramekins and refrigerate for at least two days in the fridge. Wrap each ramekin to prevent the top from drying out.
4. Serve with chocolate flakes or unsweetened desiccated coconut.

## Real Health Podcast

Brought to you by the Riordan Clinic



The Latest Information and Top Experts  
in Functional and Integrative Medicine

### LATEST EPISODES



#### EPISODE 52

##### DR. RON REFLECTS ON 35 YEARS AT RIORDAN CLINIC

*Dr. Ron Hunninghake, MD, CMO*

In this episode of the Real Health Podcast, Dr. Ron reflects on his 35 years at the Riordan Clinic, how he transitioned to holistic medicine, his role as a co-learner, and shares some insight into what is next for him. Join us in celebrating Dr. Ron's 35 years at the clinic and listen to his thoughts about what those years have meant to him.



#### EPISODE 51

##### ROLE OF EMOTIONAL TRAUMA IN CANCER

*Megan Van Zyl, MA, NTP*

In this episode of the Real Health Podcast, Dr. Lucas Tims, ND, FABNO, and Megan Van Zyl, MA, NTP, owner and CEO of the Cancer Peace University, discuss the role emotions can play in the root causes of cancer. Cancer Peace University takes a terrain approach to find the sources of emotional trauma.

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