



IAN Gawler, far left; Cathy O'Neill, above. Ms O'Neill has convened a self-help course for cancer patients based on Dr Gawler's advice.

Main photo: CRYSTAL SPENCER D126013

Eat well, exercise, quit smoking to fight cancer

By DEIRDRE SMITH

THERE are plenty of popular myths about cancer.

There are those that say you can get it from plastic water bottles or underarm deodorant.

Others say massive doses of vitamin C can drive it away.

However, Ian Gawler, one of Australia's foremost cancer counsellors, says it's a lot more fundamental than that.

"Stop smoking and get your diet sorted out," he said.

"That will reduce your risk by two-thirds."

Dr Gawler will be at Twin Towns Services Club on Tuesday, September 8, to present a

seminar called Inner Peace, Outer Health and to launch a 12-week self-help program facilitated by Tweed Heads woman Cathy O'Neill.

Ms O'Neill trained with the Gawler Foundation in Victoria.

Dr Gawler, a veterinarian who was 24 when he lost a leg to bone cancer, is a pioneer of the "mind-body" response to cancer, involving a healthy diet, exercise and meditation.

"It is what you do for yourself," he said.

"To call it alternative medicine is not helpful - it sounds like you have to do one or the other.

"But it is compatible with

what medicine can do for people."

Dr Gawler said hereditary factors accounted for only 10 per cent of cancers, with lifestyle factors - smoking, diet and exercise - responsible for up to 80 per cent.

"The best way to treat cancer is not to get it in the first place," he said.

Ms O'Neill was diagnosed with breast and lymphatic cancer in 2005.

Surgery, eight courses of chemotherapy and seven weeks of daily radiotherapy followed before she attended the Gawler Foundation's live-in retreat.

"The body has a natural inhe-

rent capacity to heal itself, given the right environment," Ms O'Neill said.

"I learnt how to reawaken my body's full potential to heal."

The self-help course is based on Dr Gawler's book, *You Can Conquer Cancer*.

Ms O'Neill said a group approach worked well for many people, as they could share their progress with other patients.

"It is designed to improve quality and quantity of life by empowering people to help themselves," she said.

The self-help group will run from September 16 to December 9. Phone 5523 3206 for more information.

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