



Patient Number One: A True Story of How One CEO Took on Cancer and Big Business in the Fight of His Life

Rick Murdock, David Fisher

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How many victims of cancer have thought, "If only I could order up a cure"?

Rick Murdock could.

In an extraordinary book that proves that truth can be stranger than fiction, Rick Murdock tells the dramatic story of his fight against a deadly lymphoma that could only be treated with technology developed by his own biotech company, and the equally harrowing battle for the survival of his company in a bruising legal dispute with a multibillion-dollar medical products giant.

Rick Murdock was forty-four years old when he was named CEO of CellPro, a thriving biotech company in Seattle that was reaping the benefits of the biotech boom in the late 1980s and early '90s. Wall Street money fueled the flame of cutting-edge research at start-up companies like CellPro, where dedicated scientists were researching treatments that showed great promise in the fight against cancer and other diseases. But then Rick found a lump in his neck, evidence of the acute mantle cell lymphoma raging through his system. This rare form of cancer had no cure: Without a miracle, Rick would die.

At CellPro, Rick found his miracle workers. In a stunning twist of fate, Rick's staff was experimenting with a radical new treatment for advanced lymphomas, though the scientists were months, if not years, away from success. Knowing they were their boss's last hope, these researchers went to work on the experiment that could save Rick's life. If they were successful, Rick would become "patient number one," the guinea pig for a technology that had never been used on humans.

The thrilling race against time to save Rick's life is only part of this remarkable story. For while Rick was fighting for his own life, he was also battling a medical products behemoth named Baxter Healthcare and archaic patent laws that threatened CellPro. If CellPro was put out of business, the promising therapies it had been developing for victims of breast cancer, leukemia, lymphoma, and other deadly cancers could disappear. **Patient Number One** shares the intriguing story of how entrepreneurs and scientists came together to form CellPro, painting a vivid picture of how researchers work tirelessly to come up with new and better treatments for disease, while their financiers play a high-stakes financial game to make money from these medical endeavors. However, in the tradition of books like *A Civil Action*, **Patient Number One** is also an illuminating, often scathing look at how medical research is conducted in America today as the bottom line can get in the way of saving lives. Lawyers, politicians, researchers, executives, and investors all want a piece of the biotech pie and will stop at nothing to preserve their special interests, even if it means keeping life-saving treatments from the people who need them.

From tense courtroom scenes between the Goliath-like Baxter and tiny CellPro to anxious moments in the laboratory with Rick's staff and Rick's own agonizing cancer treatments, **Patient Number One** takes readers into the fascinating, frustrating world of medical research and how it directly affects us all.

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Yvonne Casey:

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