

# Wait Time

## A Memoir of Cancer

Kenneth Sherman

When poet and essayist Kenneth Sherman was diagnosed with cancer, he began recording his observations in a notebook that blossomed into this powerful memoir. Using incisive and evocative language, Sherman presents a clear-eyed view of what the cancer patient feels and thinks. His narrative voice is personal but not confessional, practical but not cold, thoughtful and searching but not self-pitying or self-absorbed.

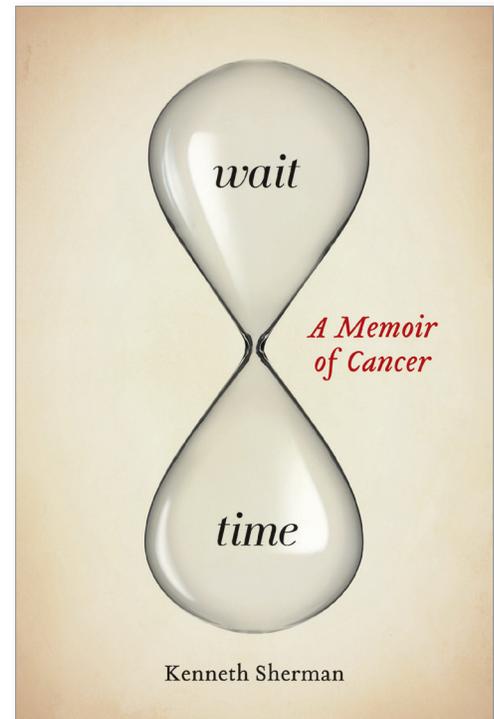
The sick person, he found, is given the difficult task of advocating on his own behalf for quicker treatment and greater responsiveness from the medical community. Sherman assumed that responsibility but found that his wait time for surgery on a malignant tumour was long and marked by an episode of bureaucratic bungling.

While he is honest about what is good and bad in the system, Sherman is not stridently political or given to directing blame. He asks, simply, for a more humane, considerate, and imaginative approach to the doctor–patient relationship.

A widely published poet, Sherman helps the reader understand the deep connection between disease and creativity – the ways in which we view illnesses metaphorically and write out of our suffering. *Wait Time* will be of interest to anyone facing a serious illness as well as to health-care providers, social workers, and psychologists working in the field. Its thoughtful observations on health, life priorities, time, and mortality will make it of interest to all readers.

In a concise foreword, Marlene Kadar shows how Sherman's experience as a patient became, in Sherman's words, "an improvisation around the theme of illness," and that wait time exists for the cancer survivor as surely as it does for the patient.

**Kenneth Sherman** is the author of ten books of poetry and two collections of essays. His most recent books are the highly acclaimed long poem *Black River* (2007) and the award-winning book of essays *What the Furies Bring* (2009). He lives in Toronto, where he conducts poetry writing workshops.



Print  
2016  
152 pages  
5¼ x 8  
Life Writing series  
978-1-77112-188-0  
paper \$22.99  
ebook available

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