The Institute for Responsible Technology (IRT) sounds like a respectable organization. Who's opposed to responsible technology?

Well, the institute is. GMOs are a responsible technology, but the IRT was established to banish them from the marketplace. IRT has knowingly spread fear and misinformation about biotechnology since its founding in 2003. For instance, one of its more egregious claims is that GMOs cause autism [1].

IRT is led by Jeffrey Smith [2] who (and this is not a joke) was once a yogic flying instructor. What's yogic flying? It's some form of bizarre meditation in which a person crosses his legs and hops around. (It's even dumber than it sounds, as this video [3] demonstrates.) The Genetic Literacy Project [2] says that Smith once claimed that yogic flying would lower the crime rate. He was also a candidate for Congress from the Natural Law Party, which believes that transcendental meditation will help improve the economy.

This is the same guy who's now giving out cancer advice. And if cancer patients listen to it, they'll die.

Institute For Responsible Technology Gives Deadly Cancer Advice

In a recent e-mail to cult members, Smith starts by trumpeting the phony link between glyphosate and cancer. That's bad enough, but it gets worse. He is now promoting a docu-series called "The Truth About Cancer [4]," which, as you might have guessed, has very little truth in it.

From the trailer [4], it seems that it just repeats all the typical conspiratorial tropes about how the
"cancer industry" can't (or doesn't want) to cure cancer, and that the real medicine can be found in Asian hot rocks and herbal tea. But we know that's not true because science has already proven it.

In an article not-so-subtly titled, "Alternative Medicine Kills Cancer Patients, Study Finds," my friend and former colleague Ross Pomeroy described research published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute that unambiguously showed that cancer patients who rejected modern medicine were likelier to die. Specifically, "[a]fter five years, 78.3% of subjects who received conventional treatments were still alive, compared to only 54.7% of subjects who used alternative medicine."

[6] There's more. The latest cancer statistics (see chart) from CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians, which is published by the American Cancer Society, show that the cancer death rate has fallen by about 27% since 1991. In the journal's estimation, some 2.6 million Americans' lives were saved since then thanks to prevention (such as quitting smoking) and advances in early detection and treatment.

Though it runs counter to popular wisdom, I argued in RealClearScience that these data demonstrate that we are slowly winning the war on cancer. That is thanks to the tireless work of scientists, medical doctors, and yes, Big Pharma, and not due to yogic flying or magical Japanese fungus.