Diving with Nitrox

I heard that the use of EANx (Nitrox) could stimulate the growth of cancer cells. Is that true?

Answer from DAN experts:

There is absolutely no evidence that Nitrox or even Oxygen under pressure would be cancer stimulating. From the scientific side, there is not even a validated suspicion. The only current “facts” under scientific observation is suspected chromosomal repair mechanisms after a single exposition in a hyperbaric hyperoxic environment (like hyperbaric oxygen therapy or oxygen-rebreather diving). This is based on specific markers for chromosomal repair mechanisms. However, we have no scientific evidence that those markers do really mark chromosomal damage. The next following hyperbaric hyperoxic exposition the other day and thereafter does not show those markers any longer. This is so far understood as an intelligent reaction of the cells “against” hyperoxia. After a break of several days of hyperbaric hyperoxic expositions all regulations seem to go back to normal, and the story starts with the next “first” exposition. In summary: Oxygen in our atmosphere is friend and foe. Life is only possible with oxygen, but oxygen and its free radicals makes us becoming older, some more, some less, and causes illness over the time, probably stimulates cancer, for some yes, for others no. Most likely oxygen in a hyperbaric environment does the same. But according to our current knowledge not significantly more. Our body seems to react with counter-measures on a single hyperbaric exposition. Means for divers: Continue with reducing diving medical risks by higher oxygen partial pressures because the sequelae of a real DCI neuro hit by diving are much more relevant. O2 is much more friend than foe.