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Cancer

What is Cancer?

Cancer is a disease that happens when cells inside the body start multiplying out-of-control and turn into lumps called tumors that kill healthy neighboring cells. Some examples are kidney cancer, skin cancer, lung cancer, colon cancer, and lymphoma.

Not all tumors cause cancer!

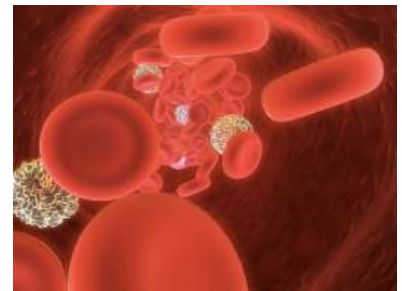
There are two types of tumors:

- 1) **Benign tumors:** Do not grow forever and do not move around in the body. They form lumps but are not normally dangerous.
- 2) **Malignant tumors:** Are made from cancerous cells that can divide forever. These cells can move in the blood to different parts of the body (a process called **metastasis**) where they make new homes and **secondary tumors**. These tumors destroy healthy tissues around them. It is very serious when metastasis happens.



Did you know?

You are made up of approximately 37.2 trillion tiny cells! Each type of cancer depends on the type of cell that is multiplying. There are more than 100 types of cancers that can affect humans.



What causes cancer?

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Benign tumor – A tumor that doesn't kill healthy tissues around it and doesn't normally cause cancer.

Malignant tumor – A tumor that kills healthy tissues around it. It causes cancer.

Metastasis – The process of formation of a secondary tumor.

Secondary tumor – A tumor that forms when one or more cancerous cells from another tumor travel in the blood and divide to make a new tumor.

The main causes of cancer are **carcinogens**, which are things we either **ingest** or are exposed to that damage our DNA and cause cancer. These include tobacco (smoking), asbestos, radiation such as gamma and x-rays, the Sun, and chemicals in car exhaust.



Signs and Symptoms

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Treatment

There are three main treatments for cancer including: **chemotherapy**, **radiation** and surgery. Chemotherapy and radiation are meant to kill the cancerous cells while surgery cuts them out of the body. Almost all cancer treatments use two or three of the above methods.

The earlier the disease is discovered and treated, the higher the chance of curing the disease and the person surviving. The stages of cancer go from 0 to 4, with higher stages being more difficult to cure. Stage 1 tumors are mostly curable with surgery and treatment while stage 4 cancer is usually not treatable.



Carcinogens – Something that can cause cancer.

Ingest – something you eat, drink, or breathe into your body.

Nausea – The feeling that you want to throw up.

Chemotherapy – Using chemicals to poison and kill the cancer cells.

Radiation – High-energy rays are used to kill cancer cells.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

1. What is cancer?
2. What
3. What are the two types of tumors? Are they both cancerous?
4. What
5. Why do cancer cells divide and multiply uncontrollably?
6. What is
7. What kind of treatment will a doctor recommend for cancer?
8. Why is it

Extension Questions:

9. Why do you think doctors do two or three of the cancer treatments and not just one?
10. All cancer treatments
11. Summarize

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