



"Excellence in Home Care"

Cancer Education

www.BethanyHealthcare.com

What is Cancer?

Cancer is a group of diseases characterized by uncontrolled growth and the spread of abnormal cells. While new drugs and therapies are becoming more effective at treating various cancers, the spread of abnormal cells, unchecked, can result in death.

What Are the Risk Factors for Cancer?

Many factors can cause cancer, both external and internal.

External

- Tobacco
- Infectious organisms
- Chemicals and radiation

Internal

- Inherited mutations
- Hormones
- Immune conditions
- Mutations that occur from metabolism

These factors may work together or in sequence to initiate a carcinogenesis response. Ten or more years often pass between exposure to external factors and detectable cancer.

All cancers caused by cigarette smoking and



heavy use of alcohol could be prevented completely. The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2010 about 171,000 cancer deaths are expected to be caused by tobacco use.

Infectious agents play a part in the development of cancers:

- Hepatitis B virus (HBV)
- Human papilloma virus (HPV)
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori), and others

Prevention Practices

What can you do to prevent certain types of cancer?

- Stop Smoking
- Use sun screen while out in the sun and avoid indoor tanning beds

- Stay current with your vaccines
- If antibiotics are prescribed by your doctor, take them as directed
- Schedule regular screening examinations such as pap smears, mammograms, colonoscopies, endoscopies, prostate exams, etc.

These exams can result in the detection and removal of pre-cancerous growths as well as the diagnosis of cancers at an early and treatable stage.

Symptoms

Symptoms vary among the cancer groups. For example, the first symptom a woman may have of breast cancer is a lump detected, usually, during a self exam or found on a mammogram.

Leukemia, on the other hand, has numerous symptoms that could also mirror other conditions. See the chart on the next page for common symptoms of the various cancers. If you are having symptoms or detect a lump or abnormal change in your skin, it is advisable to see your doctor who can make an accurate diagnosis.

Licensed Medicare and Medicaid agency by the State of Texas.

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Treatments

Depending on what type of cancer is being treated, there are several options:

- Surgery for the removal of the tumor or mass
- Radiation
- Chemotherapy
- Hormone therapy
- Biological therapy
- Targeted therapy

Surviving Cancer

Survival statistics vary greatly by cancer type and stage at diagnosis. The five-year relative survival rate for all cancers diagnosed between 1999-2005 is 68%, up from 50% in 1975-1977. The improvement in survival reflects progress in diagnosing certain cancers at an earlier stage and improvements in treatment.

In the last several years, biological therapies have emerged and have shown great promise in clinical trials, including immunotherapy which stimulates the patient's own immune system to fight the tumor. In addition, pharmaceutical companies have made great strides in producing anti-cancer drugs that inhibit the cell growth cycle.

Source: Cancer Facts & Figures 2010
The American Cancer Society

SYMPTOMS OF TYPES OF CANCERS

Breast Cancer

- Lump detected on the breast
- Less common symptoms:
- Thickening or swelling of the breast
- Tenderness or skin irritation
- Nipple abnormalities such as ulceration or discharge

Cancer of the Kidney

- Usually there are not immediate symptoms but may develop as the tumor progresses
- Blood in urine
- Lump in lower back or abdomen
- Weight loss
- Fever
- Swelling in legs and ankles

Cancer of the Liver

- Abdominal pain and swelling
- Weight loss; loss of appetite
- Jaundice (yellow discoloration)

Lung Cancer

- Persistent cough
- Sputum streaked with blood
- Chest pain
- Voice change
- Recurrent pneumonia/bronchitis

Pancreatic Cancer

- Often develops with few symptoms but as it progresses:
- Weight loss
- Pain in upper abdomen
- Occasionally glucose intolerance

Uterine Cancer

- Often develops with few symptoms but as it progresses:
- Vaginal bleeding or discharge

Ovarian Cancer

- Asymptomatic. Only 7% of cases are diagnosed at an early state

Prostate Cancer

- Often develops with few symptoms but as it progresses:
- Trouble urinating
- Blood in urine/semen
- Discomfort in the pelvic region
- Bone pain

Leukemia

- Fatigue
- Weight loss
- Repeated infections
- Fever
- Bruising easily

Bethany HomeHealth Can Help

The Bethany HomeHealth skilled nurses help patients manage their recovery in their homes through:

- Treatment evaluation and recommendations
- Providing goal-oriented assessments
- Wound care
- Giving IV treatments
- Giving and supervising medicines

They also educate the patient in:

- Self care management
- Activity and exercise
- The importance of taking medications
- Pain management
- Managing symptoms
- Improving nutrition
- Advanced directives

Physical therapists work with patients to:

- Help regain the use of weakened muscles
- Improve the range of motion in joints and help with the use of any special equipment

Occupational therapists work with patients to secure equipment needed and manage the daily task of living that may be a challenge after cancer treatments or surgery.

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