HEALTH EDUCATION LIBRARY FOR PEOPLE

World's largest FREE health Education library for people

We help patients to become better patients! We can help you understand your health and medical problems better so you can get better care in partnership with your Doctor.

OUR VISION

We think patients are the largest untapped healthcare resource and that Information therapy is the most Powerful Medicine !

OUR GOALS

1. Encouraging health insurance companies to invest in patient education.
2. Advocating information therapy.
3. Setting up a national network of patient education centers.
4. Developing patient educational materials in Indian Languages for the web.

For more information on this subject: Ask the Librarian : Free Answers to any Health Questions !!

http://www.healthlibrary.com/information.htm

For More Info: ASK A LIBRARIAN

Health Education Library For People

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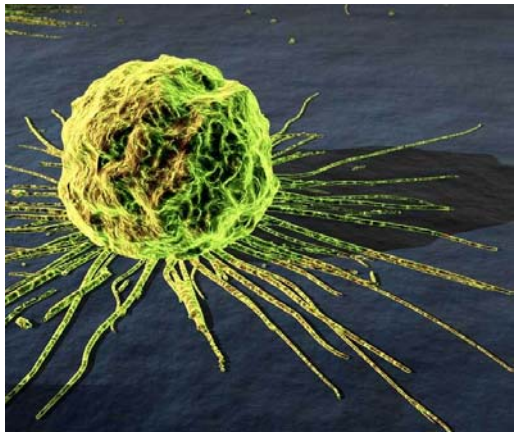
HEALTH EDUCATION LIBRARY FOR PEOPLE

Understanding Cancer



LET'S HELP ERADICATE IGNORANCE

Understanding Cancer

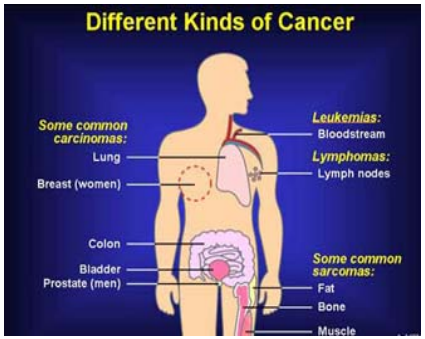
Normally, your body forms new cells as you need them, replacing old cells that die. Sometimes this process goes wrong. New cells grow even when you don't need them, and old cells don't die when they should. These extra cells can form a mass called a tumor. Some tumors lead to cancer. Cells from these tumors can invade nearby tissues. They can also break away and spread to other parts of the body.

Most cancers are named for where they start. For example, lung cancer starts in the lung. The spread of cancer from one part of the body to another is called metastasis. Symptoms and treatment depend on the cancer type and how advanced it is. Treatment plans may include surgery, radiation and/or chemotherapy.

What Causes Cancer?

Cancer is often perceived as a disease that strikes for no apparent reason. While scientists don't yet know all the reasons, many of the causes of cancer have already been identified. Besides intrinsic factors such as heredity, diet, and hormones, scientific studies point to key extrinsic factors that contribute to the cancer's development: chemicals (e.g., smoking), radiation, and viruses or bacteria.

Different Kinds of Cancer



Carcinomas: The most common types of cancer, arising from the cells that cover external and internal body surfaces. Lung, breast, and colon are the most frequent cancers of this type.

Sarcomas: are cancers arising from cells found in the supporting tissues of the body such as bone, cartilage, fat, connective tissue, and muscle.

Lymphomas: are cancers that arise in the lymph nodes and tissues of the body's immune system.

Leukemias: are cancers of the immature blood cells that grow in the bone marrow and tend to accumulate in large numbers in the bloodstream.

Beginning of Cancerous Growth

During the development of cancer, the normal balance between cell division and cell loss is disrupted. The basal cells now divide faster than it is needed to replenish the cells being shed from the surface of the skin. Each time one of these basal cells divides, the two newly formed cells will often retain the capacity to divide, thereby leading to an increase in the total number of dividing cells.

Early Cancer May Not Have Any Symptoms

Some people visit the doctor only when they feel pain or when they notice changes like a lump in the breast or unusual bleeding or discharge. But don't wait until then to be checked because early cancer may not have any symptoms. That is why screening for some cancers is important, particularly as you get older. Screening methods are designed to check for cancer in people with no symptoms.

Cancer Detection & Diagnosis

Detecting cancer early can affect the outcome of the disease for some cancers. When cancer is found, a doctor will determine what type it is and how fast it is growing & whether cancer cells have invaded nearby healthy tissue or spread (metastasized) to other parts of the body. In some cases, finding cancer early may decrease a person's risk of dying from the cancer. For this reason, improving our methods for early detection is currently a high priority for cancer researchers.