1. What is Cancer?

Cancer is a broad group of diseases.

- All types of cancer begin when cells in part of the body start to grow out of control and become abnormal.

These extra cells may form a mass of tissue called a tumor or growth.

- The tumor destroys healthy tissue.
- If the tumor gets bigger, it can invade and grow into other tissues and organs.
- Cancer cells can also break away and spread through the lymphatic system or blood stream to other parts of the body. This is called metastasis.
- Tumors that are not cancer are called benign. They do not grow into other tissues. They cannot spread to other parts of the body. Benign tumors can cause problems, especially if they grow very large and press on healthy tissues and body organs, but they usually never threaten life.

Uncontrolled cancers can cause serious illness and even death.

Factors that damage genes include:

- Tobacco use and exposure
- Certain viruses and bacteria – Human papillomavirus (HPV). This causes most cervical cancers and some vaginal and vulvar cancers.
- Hepatitis B virus (HBV). This raises the risk for liver cancer.
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). This raises the risk for some cancers, such as Kaposi sarcoma and non-Hodgkin lymphoma.
- Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) bacteria, the main cause of stomach ulcers, raises the risk for stomach cancer.
- Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun and indoor tanning.
- Exposure to cancer causing chemicals
- A person’s genetic makeup and immune status
- Use of certain medicines, such as DES (a synthetic estrogen)

2. How Common is Cancer?

Nearly 1 in 4 deaths in the U.S. is due to cancer. In the U.S., the lifetime risk for developing cancer is:

- Slightly less than 1 in 2 for men
- A little more than 1 in 3 for women

3. Causes & Risk Factors

With all cancers, genes that control cell growth and division malfunction. Damage to genes can occur from many factors.

- The obvious – avoid tobacco:
  - Don’t smoke it.
  - Don’t share it between your lips and gums.
  - Don’t inhale it secondhand.
- Avoid thirdhand smoke – tobacco toxins that linger in dust, clothing, furniture, and other materials.

4. Lower Your Risk

- The many things you can do to prevent and lower your risk of getting cancer. Do them for yourself. Do them for your loved ones.

5. Screening Tests

Screening tests help detect some types of cancer in early stages, when they are most treatable.

Finding and removing precancerous tissue can prevent cancers of the cervix, colon, and rectum.

When screening tests detect cancer at an earlier stage, cure rates are higher.

Getting screening tests, as listed below, or as advised by your doctor. If you are at a greater risk for one or more cancers, you may need screenings earlier or more often. You may need additional screenings. If a certain type of cancer is common in your family, ask your doctor about genetic testing. Also, check with your insurance plan to find out if and when screening tests are covered.

6. Treatment

Treatment depends on the type of cancer, the stage it is in, and individual factors.

Cancer treatment includes:

- Surgery to remove the cancerous tumor(s) and clear any obstruction to vital passageways
- Radiation therapy
- Chemotherapy
- Biological therapy
- Targeted therapy, such as drugs, that affect only the cancer cells
- Stem cell or bone marrow transplant
- Clinical trials

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7. Warning Signs & Symptoms

You can have cancer for years without having symptoms. There is usually no pain at the onset of cancer. At different types of cancers grow, warning signs may occur. See your doctor for a proper diagnosis.

For Bladder Cancer
- Pale-yellow or colored urine to bright red urine
- Frequent urination or feeling the need to urinate often
- Pain during urination

For Breast Cancer
- Lump or firmness in your breast or under your arm
- A change in the shape of your breast
- A breast discharge or a nipple discharge from the nipple

For Kidney Cancer
- Blood in urine
- Lump or mass on the side or lower back
- Low back pain on one side (not due to an injury)
- Weight loss without trying

For Lung Cancer
- Cough that gets worse or does not go away
- Hoarse voice. Coughing up blood or rust-colored phlegm
- Shortness of breath. New onset of wheezing.
- Chest pain. Often, this worsens with taking deep breaths, coughing, or laughing.
- Bronchitis, pneumonia, and other lung infections occur often and keep coming back.
- Tiredness
- Unexplained weight loss

For Testicular Cancer
- A lump on either testicle or surrounding area
- An enlarged testicle
- A feeling of heaviness in the scrotum
- A dull ache in the lower abdomen or groin
- Sudden buildup of fluid in the scrotum
- Pain or discomfort in a testicle or the scrotum
- Enlarged or tender breasts

For Prostate Cancer
- Problems urinating
- Blood in the urine or semen
- Pain in the lower back, hips, or ribs, or upper thighs
- Trouble having or keeping an erection
- Weakness or numbness in the feet or legs

For Ovarian Cancer
- These 4 symptoms last almost daily for longer than a few weeks:
  - Bloating or swelling of the abdomen
  - Pain in the upper abdomen or pelvic pressure
  - Trouble eating or feeling full quickly
  - Urgent need to urinate or urinating often

For Colon and Rectal Cancer
- Rectal bleeding or a change in the color of the stool
- Very narrow stools.
- Change in bowel habits for 2 or more weeks or constipation or diarrhea for 1 week or longer
- Frequent gas pains, cramps, bloating, or feeling of fullness in the abdomen
- Feeling that your bowel does not empty completely
- Weight loss with no explanation

For Testicular Cancer
- Lump or firmness in or around the testicles

For Skin Cancer
- There are three types:
  - Basal Cell
  - Squamous Cell
  - Melanoma

For Skin Self-Exam
- Do a skin self-exam monthly. The best time to do one is either in your bath or shower. Go to a well-lit area. Use both a full-length and hand-held mirror to see every part of your body.
- Look at the front and back of your body. Then raise your arms as you look around your body.
- Look at your face, neck, and scalp. Use a comb or hairbrush to move your hair to allow you to examine your scalp.

For Melanoma
- This type of skin cancer can spread to other parts of the body and can be fatal if not treated early. Often, the first sign is a change in this shape, size, or color of a mole.
- Ask about your risk for melanoma and how to perform them.

For More Information, Contact:
- American Cancer Society 800.ACS.2345 (227.2345) • www.cancer.org
- National Cancer Institute 800.4.CANCER (422.6237) • www.cancer.gov

For Bladder Cancer
- The shape of your mole can change.

For Melanoma
- The color of a mole may be uneven.
- A mole may be seen.
- There may be no change or change to their doctors.
- Cancer Risk Assessment Tool.
- www.cancer.gov or access www.cancer.gov/call 800.4.CANCER (422.6237)

Important Information - The shape of your mole can change.

Symptoms - The shape of your mole has changed.

Color - The color is uneven. A mole may be seen.

Diameter - The size change can often be seen.

Living lesion - Surface bleeding or a change in the size, shape, shade of color or symptoms occur.