

A Kid's Guide to Cancer



What is cancer?

Our bodies are made up of trillions of living cells that grow, divide, and then later die to make room for new cells. Cancer happens when some damaged cells grow too fast and don't die like a normal cell should. As the cancer cells keep growing, they often form a lump called a tumor.

Can I catch cancer like a cold or the flu?

Cancer is not something you can catch like a cold. If you know someone who has cancer, it's OK to hug them or hold their hand. In fact, they might really like it!

How does a person get cancer?

Sometimes people can get cancer, and we don't know why. But, we do know some things that can cause cancer like smoking cigarettes or getting sunburns.

Why do some people with cancer lose their hair?

Cancer doesn't make you lose your hair. People who have cancer sometimes get medicine called chemotherapy. Chemotherapy kills cancer cells, but can also kill healthy cells like the ones that help your hair grow. That's why some people with cancer can lose their hair – but it usually grows back.

Will everyone who gets cancer die?

Not at all! More people survive cancer today than ever before. We have new treatments and surgeries, and a lot of research is going on to find new ways to treat and prevent cancer.

What should I do if someone I know has cancer?

It can be very scary when someone you know has cancer. It's important to treat them just like you did before. Ask them if there's anything that you can do for them. You can make them a card, visit them, or offer to help them do things.

