

Cancer Awareness



**Drawing Connections
From a Distance**

Melissa Camacho, October 2020

Introduction

Cancer Awareness is a time to bring people together, connect with cancer experts, and learn about current resources that are crucially based on what is cancer, how it develops, and how other factors contribute to worsen cancer diseases. Cancer is a fatal disease that results from the growth of abnormal cells, or a tumor that spreads throughout the body. This guide gives an overview on how to reduce risks through *early detection, prevention, and healthy moderations*.

Cancer Stages

The earlier cancer cells are detected, the quicker it is to get treatment to cease the spread of cancer cells and have them surgically removed. According to cancer.net, the cancer cells are fully developed in 5 stages:

Stage 0: In this stage, cancer is in place, but has not not grown and has not yet spread too close to other tissues in the body.

Stage 1: This is known as the earliest stage of cancer when the tumor is very small, but has not yet spread throughout the body.

Stage 2 and Stage 3: Generally in these stages, the cancer cells have grown deeper and spread to the lymph nodes. Lymph nodes are found in the lymphatic system that carry lymph fluid and wastes between the body tissues and the bloodstream (“What are Lymph Nodes”).

Stage 4: This is where cancer is at an advanced stage, known as metastatic cancer and has spread throughout the body.

Other Cancer Developments

There are cancers that do not form tumors, such as Leukemia (cancer of the blood), Lymphoma (cancer of vessels and glands in lymphatic system), and Myeloma (cancer of white blood cells). Leukemia will be detected by a doctor if they are abnormal level of red or white blood cells. Lymphoma is detected from swollen lymph nodes in the neck, groin, underarms, and a swollen liver or spleen. Myeloma develops from abnormal plasma cells in the bone marrow that multiply and outgrow white and red blood cells (Mayoclinic.org). It is also important to know that some cancer are genetic. Genes change proteins in repairing damaged cells that can result in cancer. A parent who has the genes can pass on the changed instruction to their children (“Different Types of Cancer and Treatment”).

Cancer Prevention

There are various ways to help reduce risks of cancer, even if it is genetic. First, making healthy choices is vital in preventing many diseases, including cancer. Then that can be followed by getting clinically tested and getting screenings for cancer cells, abnormal lymph nodes, and other cellular abnormalities in the body. Furthermore, there are cancers like skin cancer that have other steps to reduce risks, such as having limited exposure to sunlight and wearing sunscreen in extreme sunny and hot weather conditions to block ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun. There are vaccines that can also help to lower cancer risks like the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine that helps to prevent cervical and several other types of cancers (“How to Prevent Cancer or Find it Early”).

There are other essential steps you can follow to reduce cancer risks, such as, limiting the consumption of red and processed meats; eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains; limit the consumption of alcohol to two drinks a day for men and one drink a day for women; and getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day to reduce obesity and inactivity which is found to be linked to breast, colorectal, lung, and pancreatic cancer. In addition, don't use tobacco products which are factors that cause lung cancer, colorectal cancer, breast cancer, throat cancer, cervical cancer, bladder cancer, and esophageal cancer (cancer of the esophagus). Non-smokers also need to reduce their exposure to secondhand smoke to reduce lung cancer (“Seven Steps to Prevent Cancer”).

COVID-19 Impact

Some people also wonder if the COVID-19 pandemic presumably gives people higher risks of developing cancer cells and other cellular abnormalities. However, this is new research for cancer experts. According to Penn Medicine, the only data that exists is that if the white blood cells do not function well, treatments to fight off cancer, such as chemotherapy and radiation therapy, will cause side effects and weaken the body's ability to fight infections. This is the reason people who are actively in treatment may have a higher risk to COVID-19. Blood cancers like leukemia and myeloma disrupt the function of the body's immune system and will not be able to fight off the infection from COVID-19. People with lung cancer have a higher risk of getting COVID-19 since it is a respiratory disease that attacks the lungs (“Cancer and COVID-19: What You Should Know and How We're Protecting Patients”).

Common Cancer Types and Treatments

Cancer Type	Treatment
Brain Cancer	Chemotherapy, Radiation, Targeted Therapy
Breast Cancer	Chemotherapy, Radiation, Hormone Therapy, Estrogen Modulator
Carcinoma (Cancer of tissue lining in internal organs)	Surgery, Chemotherapy, Radiation
Colorectal Cancer	Surgery, Chemotherapy, Radiation
Kidney Cancer	Chemotherapy, Immunotherapy, Radiation, Surgery, Targeted Therapy
Leukemia (Cancer found in the blood)	Chemotherapy, Radiation, Targeted Therapy
Lung Cancer	Chemotherapy, Radiation, Surgery, Immunotherapy, Targeted Therapy
Lymphoma (Cancer found in the lymph nodes)	Chemotherapy, Radiation, Blood Transfusion
Melanoma (Cancer found in skin cells that produce pigment of skin color)	Surgery, Chemotherapy, Radiation
Myeloma (Cancer found in blood cells)	Surgery, Chemotherapy, Radiation, Blood Transfusion
Pancreatic Cancer	Surgery, Chemotherapy, Radiation
Skin Cancer	Surgery, Chemotherapy, Radiation

Connect with Cancer Awareness Advocacy Groups, Patients, Survivors, and Caregivers

In November, 2020, the Global Virtual Conference will host a two-day virtual event where volunteers, experts, and patients share their knowledge and present ways people can get vital support to fight various cancer diseases.

Global Virtual Conference

Dates: Friday, November 13, 2020 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm through Saturday, November 14, 2020 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

To register, visit

https://globalvirtualcancerconference.com/?utm_source=gads&utm_medium=conf&utm_campaign=gryt

Sources

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