



Cancer
Society

Te Kāhui Matepukupuku
o Aotearoa

UNDERSTANDING CANCER

English

Questions you may wish to ask



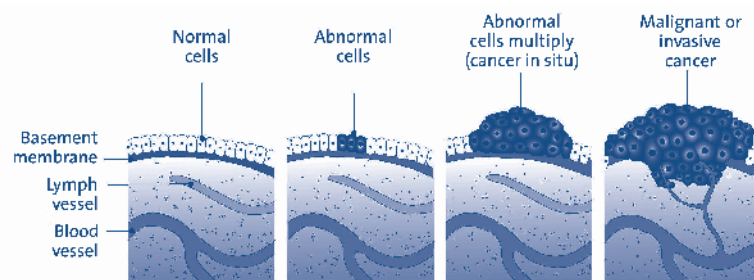
A guide for people with cancer



Introduction

Cancer is a disease of the body's cells. Our bodies are always making new cells to replace worn-out cells, or to heal damaged cells after injury. This process is controlled by certain genes: the codes that tell our cells how to heal and behave. Cancers are caused by damage to these genes. This damage usually happens during our lifetime, although a small number of people inherit a damaged gene from a parent when they are born. If genes are damaged they can behave abnormally. They may grow into a tumour (lump) which may be benign (not cancer) or malignant (cancer).

Benign tumours do not spread to other areas of the body whereas cancer has the ability to spread.



The beginnings of cancer

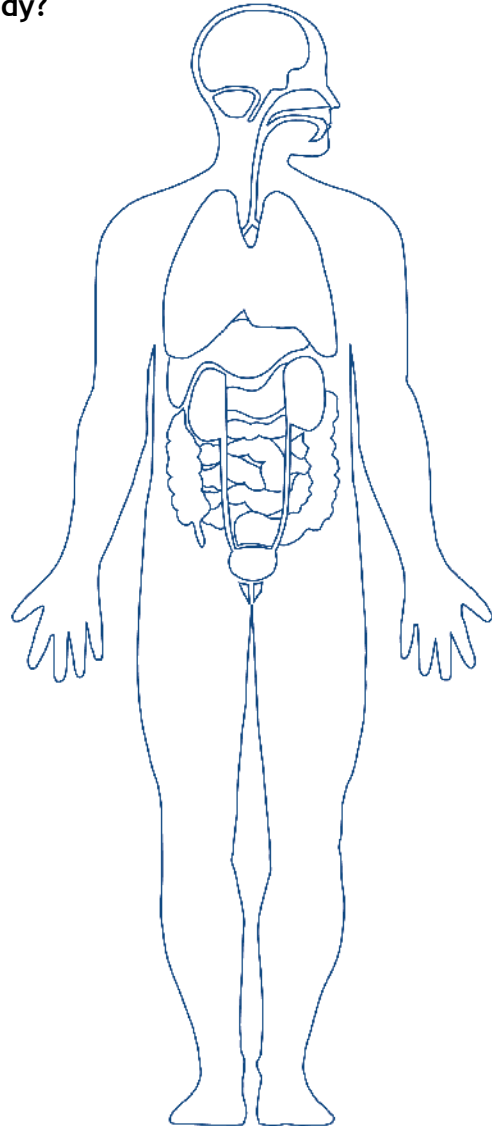
Cancer is not catching. It cannot be passed from one person to another.

There are many ways of treating cancer such as surgery, chemotherapy and radiation treatment. Talk to your doctor about what is best for you. Many cancers can be successfully treated.

When you hear you have cancer you and your family may feel understandably frightened and you may have many questions. Having your questions answered can help you feel in control of your situation. Here is a list of questions to help you make the most of your time with your doctor.

1 What is the name of my cancer?

2 Where is it in my body?




3 How is the cancer affecting my body?

4 What tests do I need?



5 When will I know the results?

8 What is the aim of the treatment?



6 What will the tests tell us?

9 What is the probability of it working?

7 What treatments are available?



10 Is there a clinical trial I can join?

13 If treatment is not working what is the plan?



11 Will I have to have treatment in hospital?

14 Are there any side-effects?

12 How do you check treatment is working?



15 Should I follow a special diet?

18 Will the treatment affect my sex life?



16 Will treatment affect my fertility?

19 Can I exercise?

17 Can I work?



20 Can I travel?

22 Will I have to pay for anything?

21 Where can I go for support?



23 What will happen if my cancer can not be controlled?



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For cancer information and support
phone 0800 CANCER (226 237)
or go to www.cancernz.org.nz



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