

CANCER:

Early detection and preventive measures

NST 13/4/2011
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and organs. Cancer cells can also break away from the malignant tumour and enter the bloodstream or lymphatic system. This is how cancer spreads from the original or primary tumour to form new tumours in other parts of the body. This spread of cancer is called metastasis.

Cancer is a disease that can be costly, debilitating, painful and potentially fatal. However, early detection can vastly improve survival chances. Here are the seven warning signs of cancer. If you have any of these symptoms, seek medical advice immediately:

- A sore that doesn't heal
- Unusual bleeding or discharge
- Obvious change of a wart or mole
- Any lump in the neck
- Change in bladder or bowel movements
- Persistent cough, blood stains or hoarseness
- Thickening or lump in the breast or other areas
- Persistent indigestion or difficulty of swallowing
- Abdominal pain and discomfort

HOW IS CANCER TREATMENT PROVIDED

There are four main types of treatment for cancer. They include:

- Surgery;
- Radiation therapy;
- Chemotherapy; and
- Biological therapy

- Smoking
- Dipping snuff or chewing tobacco
- A high-fat diet
- Being overweight
- A low fibre diet
- Alcohol abuse
- Inadequate amounts of certain vitamins and minerals
- Exposure to environmental and occupational cancer causing substances in air and water
- Overexposure to the sun
- Too much radiation from various sources
- Too much stress

THE ANTI-CANCER DIET

Some foods have been known to increase your chances of developing cancer. They do not directly cause cancer, but when various cancers were discovered, these foods were often prominent in the diet of the cancer victims. These include:

- Fatty red meat (lean meat should be consumed instead and in moderation)
- Processed food and meat of any kind
- Organs – liver, kidney, brains, etc.
- Skin of fowl
- Fried food
- High-fat dairy products
- Alcohol
- Sugar

The food you should include in



These are used to destroy cancer cells and bring about a remission. Depending on the type and stage of cancer, a doctor may decide to use one treatment method or a combination of methods to achieve the best results-



Benign tumours are not cancerous and can be removed. In most cases, they do not reoccur. Benign tumours do not spread to other parts of the body and are rarely a threat to life.

Malignant tumours, on the other hand, are cancerous. It can spread to invade and damage nearby tissues

PREVENTION: The best cure against cancer

Early detection is great but why risk getting cancer in the first place? You can greatly reduce your chances of developing cancer simply by limiting your risk factors such as:

your diet for good health, cancer prevention and maximum energy include:

- Fowl with skin removed
- Cleaned fish at least 3 times a week
- Low-fat dairy products
- Lots of fruits and vegetables
- Pasta
- Beans and lentils
- Grains and nuts
- Soy protein
- Fibre
- Garlic
- Calcium, Zinc, Iron, etc.
- Folic acid
- Anti-oxidants such as vitamins A, C and E; beta- carotene, etc
- EPA (Eicosapentaenoic acid) - a fatty acid from fish that helps to limit tumour development
- Gamma Linolenic Acid (EFA) - an essential fatty acid which prevents a metastasis in some cancers by increasing the strength of a cellular glue called E-cadherin. This holds the cells tightly to one another and prevents them from breaking loose and spreading
- Lots of fresh, clean water

Even with a healthy, balanced diet, you must not discount the importance of watching your calorie intake as well as exercising and keeping fit.

WHAT IS CANCER

In Malaysia, cancer is the second leading cause of deaths. It is estimated that 40,000 cases are diagnosed yearly. Cancer can attack any organ of the body. The major cancer affecting males are cancer of the lung, nasopharynx, colon, leukaemia, rectum and prostate; and for females are cancer of the breast, cervix, colon, ovary, leukaemia and lung .

There are basically 3 types of cancer:

- **Carcinomas:** These usually occur in rapidly dividing tissues such as cells that cover and line

our bodies, including the skin, colon, breast, liver and breathing passages. These are the most common forms of cancer.

- **Sarcomas:** This type of cancer generally occurs in more slowly dividing tissues such as the muscle and nerve tissues.
- **Leukaemia:** These are cancers of the tissues that form the blood cells.

Cancer cells are abnormal cells. They keep dividing, forming more cells without control or order. A mass of extra tissue, called a growth or tumour, is formed. It can be either benign or malignant.