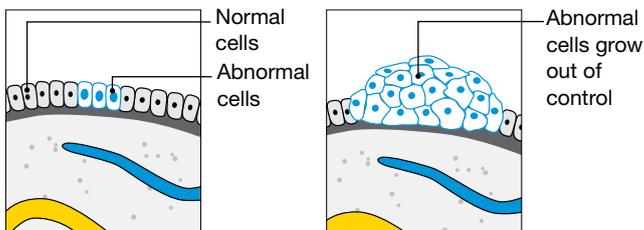


What is cancer?

Cancer is a disease that has to do with the body's cells. The body is made up of billions of cells. Normal cells grow and divide (split into two). When they die, they are replaced by new cells.

Sometimes, something goes wrong with some cells and they don't die. They divide out of control and may grow into a lump (tumour) called cancer. There are over 100 different types of cancer.



How did I get cancer?

Cancer can happen to anybody.

Nobody really knows what causes most cancers.

Some things (called risk factors) may make it more likely to happen. These include smoking, not getting enough exercise, drinking too much alcohol, not eating well and being overweight. Cancer may also develop because of family history or substances in our environment that affect our bodies, such as chemicals and asbestos. ➔

Cancer won't go away without treatment

How can I find out if I have cancer?

Different tests help the doctor find out if you have cancer and what type it is.

You may have tests using machines that look inside the body (scans) or blood tests. Sometimes the doctor removes some cells from the tumour to see if they are healthy or not (biopsy).

These tests will also help the doctor decide what treatment you need.

What happens if I have cancer?

Cancer is treated in different ways including:

- surgery to cut out the cancer
- medicines called chemotherapy
- x-rays called radiotherapy.

Facts

- Cancer doesn't always cause death.
- Cancer is not punishment for something you did wrong.
- You can't catch cancer from someone who has cancer.
- You can have visitors in hospital.
- Treatment doesn't always make you feel sick.
- Not everyone loses their hair.
- Treatment helps cancer go away.

More information

● **Cancer Council Helpline**

13 11 20

www.cancerCouncil.com.au

● **Your local Aboriginal health service**

● **Cancer treatment fact sheet**