

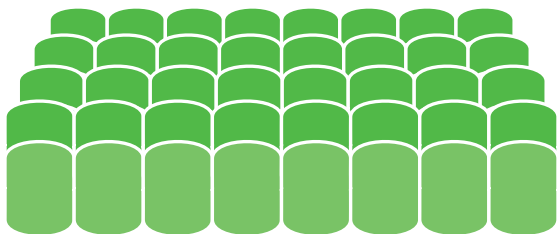
**BE THE GENERATION
THAT'S NOT AFRAID TO
TALK ABOUT
CANCER**



#TALKTEENAGECANCER

WHAT IS CANCER?

Any one of us can develop cancer. Anyone of any age. Cancer starts in our cells, the building blocks that make up the organs and tissues of our body. Usually, these cells divide to make new cells in a controlled way. This is how our bodies grow, heal and repair.



Sometimes, this goes wrong and the cell becomes abnormal (mutated). The abnormal cell keeps dividing and making more and more abnormal cells. These get in the way of our healthy cells. What triggers these cells to go wrong is not always clear.



ANYONE OF ANY AGE CAN GET CANCER

Every day in the UK, 7 teenagers and young adults are diagnosed with cancer. Although cancer in young people is rare, it's important to recognise the warning signs. Get to know your body; be the expert of your body; listen to your body. If you notice any of these warning signs or any other changes, chances are it is nothing to do with cancer but if it is **UNEXPLAINED**, **PERSISTENT** or **EXTREME** then it is worth seeing a doctor.

L.U.M.P.S



Lumps



**Unexplained
tiredness**



**Mole
changes**



Pain



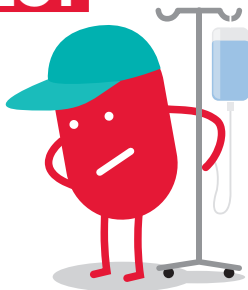
**Significant
weight
change**

The common signs of cancer in young people are:

- **Lump, bump or swelling** (anywhere in the body)
- **Unexplained tiredness** (ongoing fatigue that even a good night's sleep doesn't help)
- **Mole changes** (change in size, shape, colour or texture of a mole)
- **Pain** (that doesn't go away with painkillers)
- **Significant weight change** (but you have not changed your diet, how much exercise you are doing or any medication you might be on)
- **Headaches**
- **Unexplained bruising and bleeding**

WHAT CANCERS COMMONLY AFFECT TEENAGERS?

Remember, cancer in young people is rare but these are the most common types that could affect your age group. We covered a few of these in our presentation but here is some more information you might find useful:



SOFT TISSUE SARCOMA

These are cancers of supportive tissue which includes muscle, cartilage, fat cells, blood vessels and nerves. As soft tissue is found all over your body, they can grow pretty much anywhere.

BRAIN TUMOUR

These are classified as either benign or malignant. The benign ones tend to grow more slowly and are less likely to come back if they have been completely removed. The malignant ones tend to grow faster, can sometimes spread and may come back after treatment.

OVARIAN CANCER

Starts in the ovaries where women's eggs are stored. The most common type affects the surface layer of the ovary. Ovarian cancer can be hard to spot in the early stages, because the symptoms are often similar to period symptoms.

CERVICAL CANCER

This is usually caused by HPV. A lot of types of the virus are harmless, but some can damage cells in the cervix and eventually cause cancer if they are not treated.

LYMPHOMA

Lymphomas are types of blood cancer that start in the lymphatic system – a network of glands and tubes that run through the body. There are two main types: Hodgkin lymphoma and Non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Both are caused by white blood cells behaving strangely.

THYROID CANCER

The thyroid is a hormone producing gland at the front of your neck, just above your collarbone. The most common type tends to affect younger people especially women.

LEUKAEMIA

This is a cancer of the cells in the bone marrow where new blood cells are made. The most common types involve abnormal white blood cells being released, which also affects the production of normal red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets.

BONE CANCER

This cancer either starts in the cells that make your bones grow or causes a tumour to grow in or around your bones. It usually affects the larger bones in the body.

SKIN CANCER

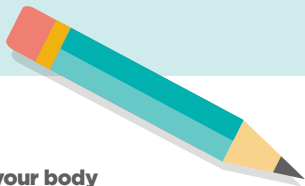
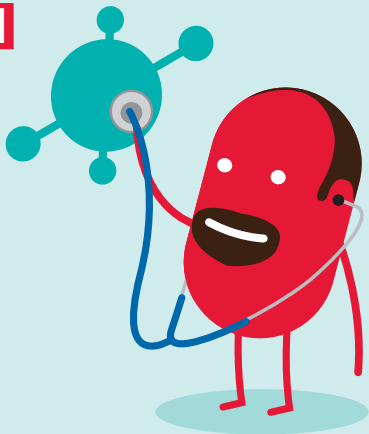
There are two different categories of skin cancer: melanoma and non-melanoma. Melanoma starts in skin cells and usually affects moles. Non-melanoma cancers affect different skin cells. Malignant melanoma occurs relatively frequently at a younger age and incidence rates are higher for females than for males aged between 15-19. Both types can be caused by exposure to the sun.

TESTICULAR CANCER

There are various types but the most common affects germ cells, which the body uses to help create sperm. Most common in 15-35 year olds.

TAKE ACTION

If you are worried about your health, speak to your parents/ carer/responsible adult and a doctor – they will want to help you. Remember, nobody knows how you feel better than you! You are the expert of your own body! Know your body and know how to spot if something changes. If in doubt, get it checked out.



CHECKLIST



YOU are the expert of your body



If you spot changes, speak to someone



Never ignore anything, it's better to get it checked



Write down how you're feeling before you go to the doctor



You may need to go back to your GP more than once



No need to be embarrassed

LOVE YOUR BODY

The vast majority of cancers that affect young people are not down to anything they have done, it is purely bad luck. However, lifestyle is responsible for a large number of cancers later on in life. The following lifestyle choices cannot guarantee you will never get cancer but will help you to reduce the risk, so making changes now can help you invest in your health in the long term.

- **Avoid smoking:** 90% of the cases of lung cancer are due to smoking
- **Move more:** Be active and exercise regularly (at least an hour a day). Whether it's walking or windsurfing... do something every day
- **Eat well:** A good diet and healthy weight can help reduce the risk of developing cancer. Try and have at least five portions of fruit and vegetables each day
- **Avoid binge drinking alcohol:** The recommendation is to drink no more than 14 units a week - 14 units is roughly 7 drinks and the recommendation is to spread this over at least three days
- **Be safe in the sun:** UV rays from the sun damage our skin – UVA rays are associated with skin ageing and UVB rays are responsible for sun burn. Exposure to the sun's UV rays causes 86% of skin cancer cases. UV rays can affect all skin types but some skin types are more sensitive than others
- **Don't use sunbeds:** The intensity of UVA rays in sunbeds can be more than ten times stronger than the midday sun
- **Know your body:** Be the expert of your body. If you do find a problem or are worried, remember to talk to someone you trust

BE THE GENERATION THAT'S NOT AFRAID TO TALK ABOUT CANCER!

WHAT WE DO

Teenage Cancer Trust make sure young people don't face cancer alone.

We do it by helping young people and their families deal with the many ways that cancer can affect your body, your mind and your life. We do it in partnership with the NHS and by bringing young people together so they can support each other. And we do it from the moment cancer is diagnosed until long after treatment is over.

To find out more, get involved or keep in touch online:



facebook.com/teenagecancertrust



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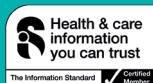


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www.teenagecancertrust.org



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