

The Initial Symptoms of Cancer*



By: Dorothy Holloway, RN.



*** The followings signs and symptoms indicate you may have cancer!**

1. Brain Cancer

Symptoms: have long-lasting headaches together with nausea accompanied with blurry vision; feeling weak and clumsy; having difficulty walking; having seizures; changed mental status such as changes in concentration, memory, attention, or alertness; having difficulty with speech; and gradual changed in intellectual or emotional capacity. In many people, the onset of these symptoms is very gradual and may be missed by both the person with the brain tumor and the family.

2. Cancer in Blood or Leukemia

Symptoms: have fevers or night sweats; swollen lymph nodes that normally do not hurt, especially lymph nodes in the neck or armpits; frequent infections; bleeding and bruising easily without knowing the cause, such as bleeding gums; having tiny red spots under the skin or purplish patches

in the skin; feeling weak or tired and looking more pale than usual; weight loss quickly and unintentional; swelling or discomfort in the abdomen from a swollen spleen or liver. However, people with chronic leukemia may not have any symptoms until the cancer has reached an advanced stage.

3. Lung Cancer

Symptoms: a new cough that doesn't go away; coughing up blood, even a small amount; shortness of breath; losing weight without trying; repeated infections such as pneumonia and bronchitis; headache, bone pain, and chest pain.

4. Liver Cancer

Symptoms; losing weight without trying; upper abdominal pain; nausea and vomiting; an enlarged liver; abdominal swelling; yellow discoloration of skin (Jaundice) and the white of eyes; white, chalky stools; general weakness and fatigue; and loss of appetite.

5. Bladder Cancer

Symptoms: change in bladder habits such as feeling the strong urge to urinate without producing much urine or having to urinate very often; blood in the urine (hematuria); pain or burning during urination without any evidences of urinary tract infection; back pain and pelvic pain.

6. Cervical Cancer

Symptoms: bleeding from the vagina that is not the normal monthly cycle time; abnormal pain and bleeding after sex; and vaginal discharge. Advanced symptoms may include swelling of one or both legs, back or pelvic pain, difficulty urinating or

defecating because of obstruction; fatigue and weight loss. Cervical cancer is now considered the easiest female cancer to prevent.

7. Oral Cancer

Symptoms: swelling in the mouth; there are development of velvety red, white spots in the mouth; persistent sores or abnormal numbness; loss of feeling or feeling sore and tender in any area of the mouth, neck or facial area; unexplained oral bleeding that does not heal within two weeks; having difficulty speaking, chewing, swallowing, or moving the tongue or jaw; experiencing a soreness or feeling that something is in the back of the throat; hoarseness; chronic sore throat; unexplained ear pain; and unintentional weight loss.

8. Uterus Cancer

Symptoms: abnormal vaginal bleeding (most common); pain or difficulty when emptying the bladder; pain during sex; and pain in the pelvic area.

9. Stomach Cancer

Symptoms: weight decreases quickly without trying to lose weight; vomiting mixes with blood or discharged blood in the stool; abnormal upset stomach or indigestion that includes a burning sensation or abnormal heartburn; discomfort or pain in the abdomen or a lump or tumor in the abdominal area; weakness and fatigue; loss of appetite; have stomach bloating after meals. Early stomach cancer is difficult to detect.

10. Breast Cancer

Symptoms: a lump in the underarm area; swelling of a part of the breast or the entire breast; breast or nipple pain or the nipple turns inward; a nipple discharge other than breast milk; some redness, or thickening of the nipple or breast skin.

11. Colon Cancer

Symptoms: rapid weight loss; stomach pain and abnormal digestion; blood mixed in stool; the color of skin and eyes changes to yellow ; extreme tiredness or unexplained fatigue; low red blood cell count or low iron in the red blood cells.

12. Ovarian Cancer

Symptoms: monthly menstruation is irregular and there may be abnormal aching; severe low back pain, nausea, tiredness, and bleeding after many years of no menstrual period; problems with the intestines; symptoms of upset indigestion; back pain and unintentional weight loss.

13. Pancreatic Cancer

Symptoms: abdominal pain; nausea; vomiting; weakness; weight loss; loss of appetite; feeling of bloating after eating; jaundice ; dark tea colored urine; clay colored stools; intense itching.

14. Non-specific type of cancer

Broad symptoms for nonspecific type of cancer may include:

- Unintentional Weight Loss: when 10 pounds of weight or more are lost unintentionally. It is a major sign that you are facing some type of illness. Even though weight loss can be good news, it is still necessary to consult your doctor. Extreme weight loss can be a symptom of cancer.
- Chronic Cough: a cough that is persistent with some mixtures of mucus and blood needs to be diagnosed by doctors. Chronic cough with mucus and/or blood can be a sign of lung cancer.



- Pain: pain, normally, is not an early symptom of cancer except the type of cancer that spreads to the bone. In most cases, pain occurs when cancer spreads to advanced levels and begins to affect other organs and nerve functions.
- Pain in the form of headaches can be associated with brain cancer or brain tumors.
- Lower Back Pain. Persistent and abnormal back pain can be a cancer symptom that may be associated with colon cancer or ovarian cancer.
- Stomach pains that happen persistently and frequently can be related to different types of cancer, such as pancreatic cancer and stomach cancer.
- Persistent Fatigue. Fatigue is the most common symptom of cancer; especially when the cancer is in the more advanced stages.

- Bowel changes: if you experience constipation, diarrhea, blood in the stools, gas, thinner stools, or just a general change in bowel habits, see your doctor. These symptoms are most commonly associated with colon cancer but are also related to other cancer types.
- Persistent and frequent fever is a very nonspecific symptom of many mild to severe illnesses that may include cancer. Fevers are commonly related with types of cancer that affect the blood such as lymphoma and leukemia. Fevers are also common in people whose cancer has spread to advanced stages.
- Keep in mind that these symptoms of cancer are very vague. If you have one or more of the symptoms mentioned above, it is not a red flag indicating that you have cancer, but it is a sign for you to visit your doctor to run certain medical tests as soon as possible.
- Breast tissue naturally has a bumpy texture that varies from one woman to another. Lumps that feel harder or different from rest of the breast tissue or you feel like that has been a change or maybe a concern; consult your doctor immediately.

Make an appointment with your doctor if you experience any signs or symptoms that worry you!