Cancer

Cancer is a general term used to refer to a condition where the body's cells begin to grow and reproduce in an uncontrollable way. These cells can then invade and destroy healthy tissue, including organs.

Cancer sometimes begins in one part of the body before spreading to other parts. This process is known as metastasis.

Cancer is a common condition and most of us will know someone who has had the disease. In 2009, 320,467 new cases of cancer were diagnosed in the UK. More than one in three people will develop some form of cancer during their lifetime.

We all know that cancer is a cruel disease which can kill, and which can cause great pain and suffering. But many types of cancer can increasingly be treated and cured, especially if they are diagnosed at an early stage.

Cancer Research, a leading cancer charity, provide advice on how to Spot Cancer Early with advice on how patients, their relatives and loved ones, and other professionals, can spot the signs of common cancers quickly.

If you are worried about issues with cancer, for yourself or another person, consult your GP as soon as possible. A full list of GPs is available on the NHS website - use the 'Find and choose services' option and click GPs.

Depending on your situation you may find it useful to look at our pages on Pain management and End of life care.

Reducing the risks of cancer

Other information and advice