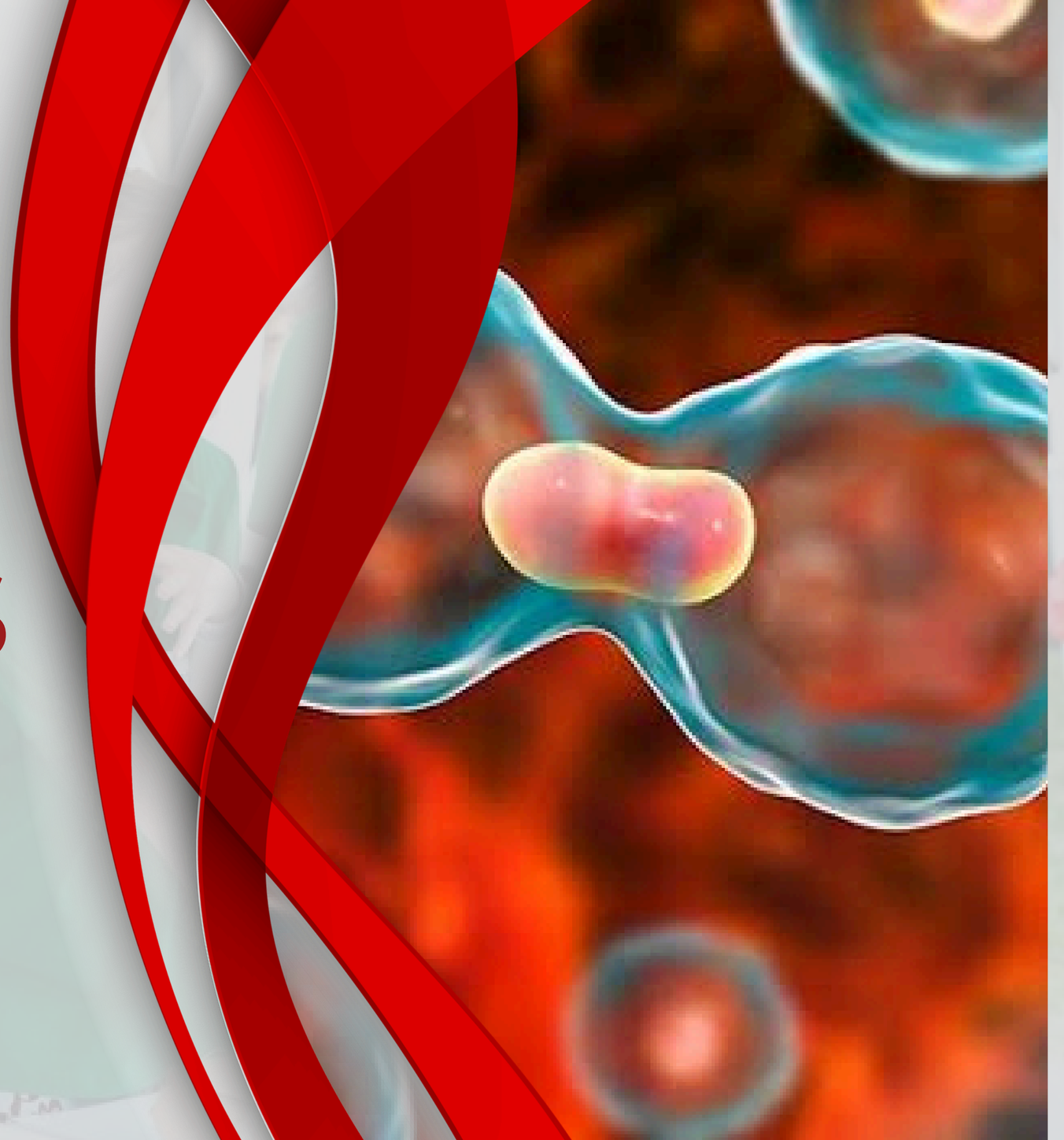
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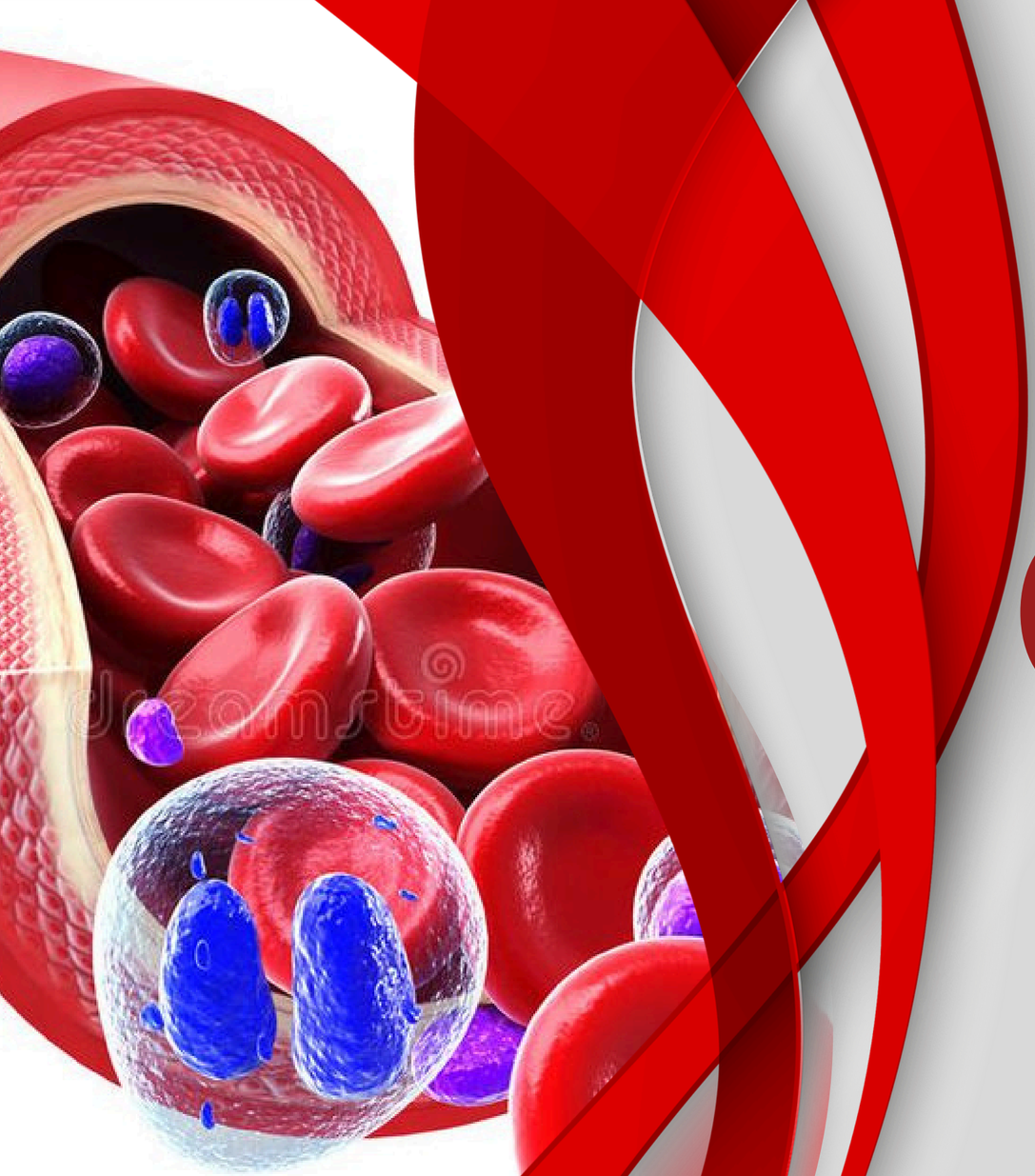
CANCER AWARENESS

“Let’s join hands to fight against cancer.”



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QUESTIONS



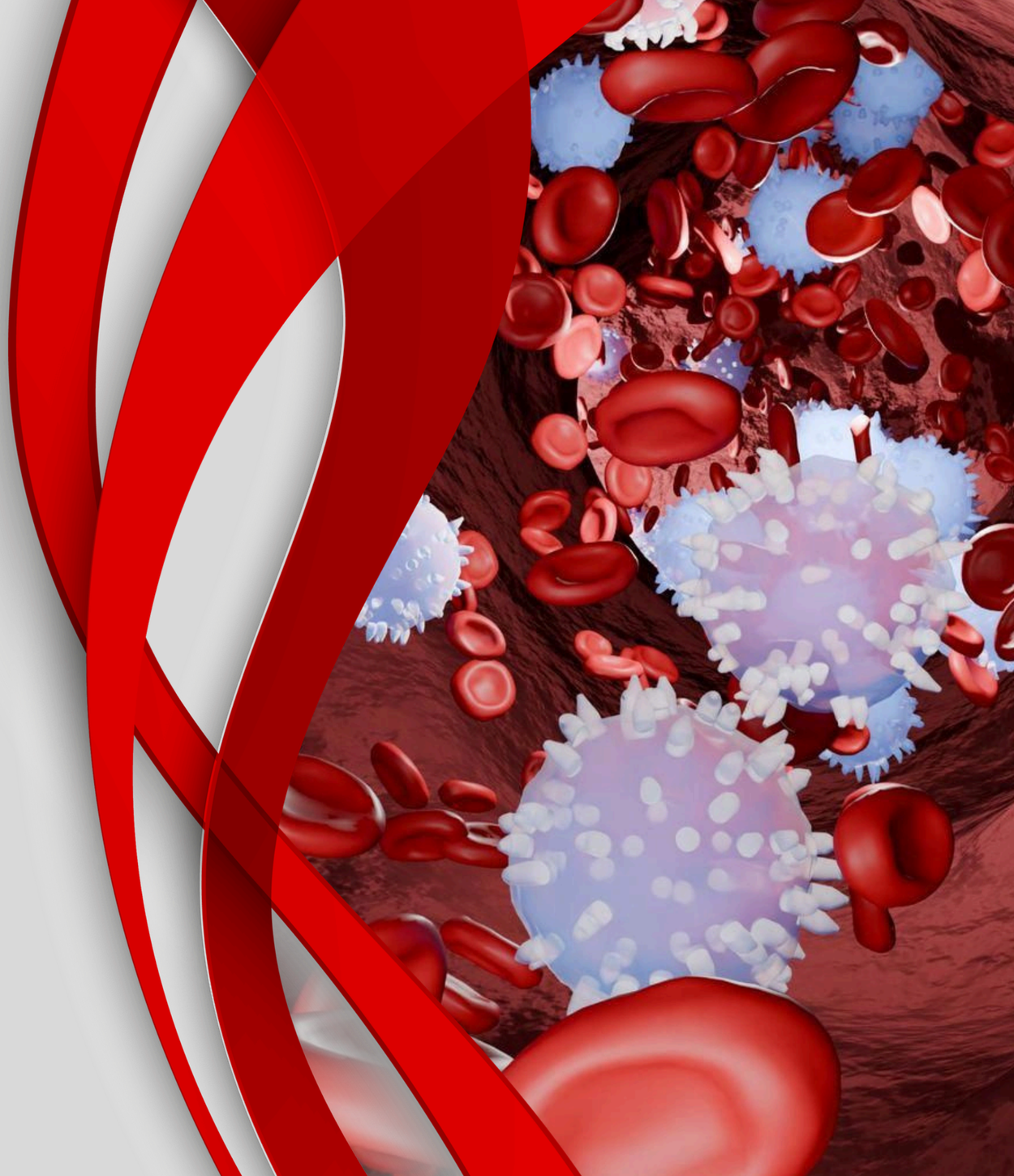
- Have you heard anything about cancer before?
- What exactly do you think cancer is?

OVERVIEW

The human body is made up of trillions of cells. Normal human cells grow and multiply through a process called cell division to form new cells as the body needs them. When cells grow old or become damaged, they die, and new cells take their place. Sometimes this process breaks down, and abnormal or damaged cells grow and multiply when they shouldn’t. These cells may form tumors, which are lumps of tissue. Tumors can be cancerous or not cancerous (benign).

Cancerous tumors are bad because they spread into, or invade, nearby tissues and can travel to distant places in the body to form new tumors (a process called metastasis). Cancerous tumors may also be called malignant tumors. Many cancers form solid tumors, but cancers of the blood, such as leukemia, generally do not.

Benign tumors do not spread into, or invade, nearby tissues. When removed, benign tumors usually don’t grow back, whereas cancerous tumors sometimes do. Benign tumors can sometimes be quite large, however. Some can cause serious symptoms or be life threatening, such as benign tumors in the brain.





CANCER STATISTICS IN TANZANIA

There has been a consistent and a significant rise in cancer in Tanzania. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) estimates that there are 42,060 new cases of cancer per year in Tanzania, with a high mortality rate of 28,610 deaths per year, showing that many patients are diagnosed at advanced stages.

The most common cancers in Tanzania include cervical cancer, prostate cancer, and breast cancer.

CANCER CENTERS IN TANZANIA

1.Muhimbili National Hospital
2.Aga Khan Hospital Dar-es-salaam
3.Bugando Medical Centre,
4.Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre
5.Ocean Road Cancer Institute
6.Good Samaritan Cancer Referral Hospital – Ifakara

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Swelling or lumps anywhere such as in the neck, underarm, stomach, and groin
- Weight loss for no known reason
- Bleeding or bruising, for no known reason
- Cough or hoarseness that does not go away
- Fatigue that is severe and lasts
- Fever or night sweats for no known reason

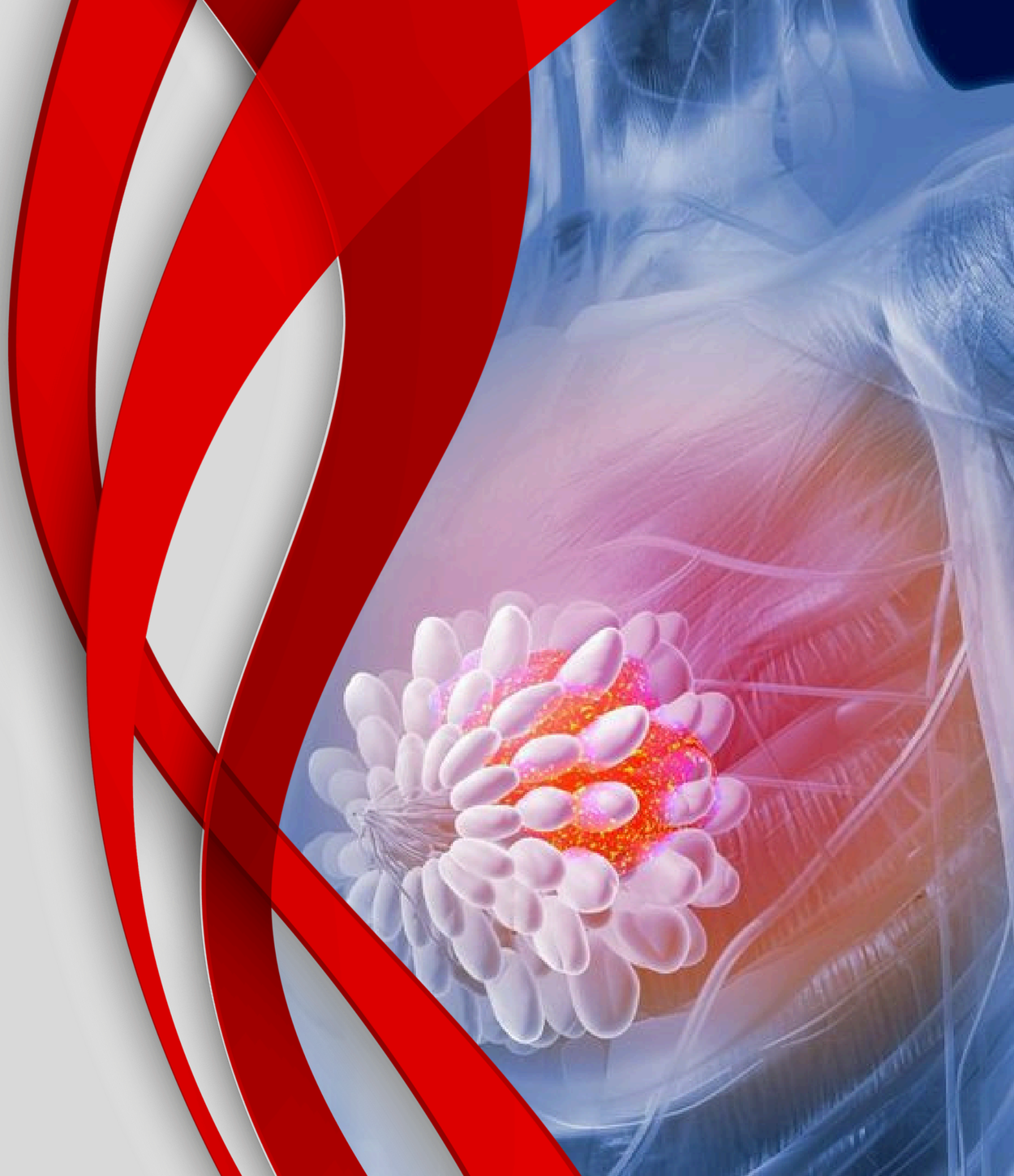




BREAST CHANGES

- Lump or firm feeling in your breast or under your arm
- Nipple changes or discharge
- Skin that is itchy, red, scaly, dimpled, or puckered





BLADDER AND/OR BOWEL CHANGES

- Trouble urinating
- Pain when urinating
- Blood in the urine or stool
- Changes in bowel habits





EATING PROBLEMS

- Pain after eating (heartburn or indigestion that doesn’t go away)
- Trouble swallowing
- Belly pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Appetite changes

MOUTH CHANGES

- A white or red patch on the tongue or in your mouth
- Bleeding, pain, or numbness in the lip or mouth



NEUROLOGICAL PROBLEMS

- Headaches
- Seizures
- Vision changes
- Hearing changes
- Drooping of the face

SKIN CHANGES

- A flesh-colored lump that bleeds or turns scaly
- A new mole or a change in an existing mole
- A sore that does not heal
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes)



RISK FACTORS

Risk factors are the things that may increase someone’s chances of developing cancer.



HABITS & LIFESTYLE

- Cigarette smoking (Tobacco)
- Alcoholism
- Applying harmful skin whitening chemicals (lotions)
- Junk diets



MEDICAL & PHYSICAL FACTORS

- Infections
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Age



ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURES

- Ultraviolet solar radiations (sun rays)
- Inhaling heavy chemical industrial smokes

CANCER DIAGNOSIS

If you have a symptom or a screening test result that suggests cancer, a doctor will do further testing to determine whether it is due to cancer or some other cause. There is no single test that can diagnose cancer. Your doctor may ask about your personal and family medical history, do a physical exam, and order lab tests, imaging tests (scans), and/or other tests or procedures. You may also need a biopsy (testing of tissue), which is often the only way to tell for sure if you have cancer.

CANCER TREATMENTS

There are many types of cancer treatment and the type a patient receives depend the cancer and how advanced it is. Some cancers only require one treatment; however, most require a combination of treatments, such as surgery with chemotherapy and radiation therapy.



CHEMOTHERAPY

(Also called chemo) is a type of cancer treatment that uses drugs to kill cancer cells. Chemotherapy works by stopping or slowing the growth of cancer cells, which grow and divide quickly. Chemotherapy can be used to shrink tumors that are causing pain and other problems and/or to cure cancer, lessen the chance it will return, and stop or slow its growth.

A challenge with chemotherapy is that it not only kills fast-growing cancer cells, but it also kills or slows the growth of healthy rapidly-dividing cells, such as those that line your mouth and intestines and those that cause your hair to grow. Damage to such healthy cells may cause such unwanted side effects as mouth sores, nausea, and hair loss. These side effects often get better or go away once the chemotherapy treatment is finished.





RADIATION THERAPY

Radiation therapy kills cancer cells or slows their growth by damaging their DNA. Radiation therapy (also called radiotherapy) is a cancer treatment that uses high doses of radiation to kill cancer cells and shrink tumors. At low doses, radiation is used in x-rays to see inside your body, as with x-rays of your teeth or broken bones.

SURGERY

Surgery is used to treat many types of cancer. It works best for solid tumors that are contained in one area. Surgery, when used to treat cancer, is a procedure in which a surgeon removes cancer from your body. Surgeons are medical doctors with special training in surgery.



SCENARIOS FOR GROUP DISCUSSIONS

NOTE: Character names are used for illustrative purposes only.

SCENARIO 1

Once upon a time, in a small village, there lived a boy named Mayele. One day, Mayele started feeling tired all the time, and he began to lose weight. His family noticed, but they did not think it was anything serious. They thought that Mayele was just not eating enough or getting enough rest. But as time went on, Mayele's condition grew worse. He started to have difficulty breathing and was often in pain. Finally, Mayele's family took him to the local hospital, where the doctors diagnosed him with cancer. But Mayele's family did not believe the doctors, and they took Mayele home instead of starting treatment. They thought that cancer was not a real disease but rather a curse or a sign of witchcraft. Mayele’s family took him to traditional healers and witch doctors for help. But no matter what they tried, Mayele’s health continued to deteriorate. Eventually, it was too late, and Mayele passed away. After Mayele’s death, his family realized the importance of seeking proper medical care and treatment for illnesses like cancer. They resolved to share Mayele's story with others, so that no one else would have to suffer the same fate.

I*n the end, the moral of Mayele's story is that it is important to seek medical treatment for serious illnesses like cancer. While traditional healers and witch doctors may have their place, it is crucial to consult with qualified medical professionals when it comes to matters of health and well-being.*



QUESTIONS ON SCENARIO 1

1. Do you believe that illness can be a sign of witchcraft?
2. How do you think Mayele's family should have responded to his diagnosis?
3. Do you think that Mayele’s family learned an important lesson from his death?
4. What do you think about the role of traditional healers and witch doctors in treating illness?
5. How would you feel if you or a loved one were diagnosed with a serious illness like cancer?

SCENARIO 2

Fikile Bhele was a bright and intelligent girl who loved school. She was popular with her classmates and excelled in her studies. One day, Fikile noticed a lump in her breast. She was scared, but she didn’t want to worry her family, so she kept it to herself. The lump grew bigger and bigger, and soon it was too painful to ignore. Fikile told her parents, who took her to the doctor. The doctor diagnosed Fikile with breast cancer, and she had surgery to remove the tumor. The surgery was successful, but Fikile’s breast had to be amputated. When Fikile returned to school, she was worried about how her classmates would react. She was relieved to find that most of her classmates were supportive, but a few started making fun of her. They called her “one-breasted Fikile” and made jokes about her appearance. Fikile felt humiliated and ashamed. She started skipping school and withdrawing from her friends. But one day, Fikile had an idea. She decided to speak to the class about her experience and share her story with them. She told them about the importance of early detection and treatment for breast cancer. She also spoke about the need for understanding and compassion for those who have been affected by cancer. Fikile's words touched her classmates, and the teasing stopped. Fikile felt proud of herself for standing up for what she believed in. She had shown courage and strength in the face of adversity, and she had made a difference in her school.

QUESTIONS ON SCENARIO 2



1. What do you think of Fikile's decision to share her story with her classmates?
2. How do you think the teasing made Fikile feel?
3. What would you have done if you were in Fikile’s shoes?
4. Why do you think people make fun of those who are different from them?
5. Have you ever felt like an outsider or like you didn’t belong? How did that make you feel?
6. How can we create a more accepting and inclusive environment in our schools and communities?
7. How do you think cancer affects people’s lives, both physically and emotionally?
8. What can you do to support those who are affected by cancer?
9. What do you think the future holds for Fikile?
10. What do you think is the most important message of this story?

SCENARIO 3

Bernard Kicheleri, a 17-year-old cancer survivor, was born and raised in Ifakara town, Morogoro. The first signs of trouble appeared when he was just five years old. He complained to his mother of pain in his left hand. Concerned, she took him to the local hospital. Initial diagnoses suggested nothing serious, and Bernard’s pain was attributed to temporary discomfort that would subside with painkillers.

However, the pain intensified two years later, accompanied by swelling. This time, doctors referred the young boy to Burere Hospital for further investigation. An excision biopsy revealed a shocking diagnosis: bone cancer, specifically soft tissue sarcoma. A subsequent surgery to remove the affected part of the humerus offered hope for a cancer-free future.

Bernard returned to his studies in Ifakara, but the relief was shortlived. In late 2019, the pain returned, more severe than ever. This time, the journey took him to Muhimbili National Hospital in Dar es Salaam. Another biopsy was performed, and to everyone’s relief, the results indicated chronic inflammation rather than cancer.

SCENARIO 3 (CONTINUED)

A year-long course of antibiotics was prescribed but came with unpleasant side effects. Once the treatment ended in 2021, there seemed to be a brief period of improvement. Unfortunately, a fourth surgery in 2022 confirmed the devastating news: the cancer had returned, this time with a more aggressive form. Faced with a life-threatening situation, doctors recommended amputation as the only possible option. A heart-wrenching decision for a 16-year-old boy on the edge of his final year of high school. Persistent, Bernard and his family searched for alternative treatments in India. While there was a possibility of saving his hand, doctors strongly advised amputation to minimize the risk of recurrence.

With courage and resilience, Bernard underwent the amputation of his left hand and arm in March 2023. Despite the physical loss, he was determined to overcome this challenge. Against all odds, he completed his final year of high school and achieved excellent results.

Today, Bernard is a cancer survivor and a vocal advocate for raising awareness about the disease. His story is a testament to human strength and perseverance.

QUESTIONS ON SCENARIO 3



1. How did Bernard's family support him?
2. What kind of emotional impact would this experience have on a young person?
3. How can society provide better support for cancer patients and survivors and their families?
4. What lessons can be learned from Bernard’s story?
5. How can we increase awareness about the early signs of cancer?
6. What were the challenges Bernard faced during his treatment?
7. How did Bernard cope with the amputation?

SCENARIO 4

Tom and Jerry were best friends since they were young. When Jerry started to feel tired and a little off, he knew something was wrong. After a trip to the doctor, Jerry was diagnosed with cancer. The news was devastating for both Jerry and Tom, and Tom was determined to be there for his best friend. Jerry began chemotherapy, and the treatment took a toll on his body. He lost his hair and became weak. Tom was there for him every step of the way: he sat with Jerry in the hospital, brought him his favorite snacks, and even shaved his own head in solidarity. When Jerry returned to school, he was met with cruel laughter and mocking. The kids teased him for his bald head and called him names. Jerry tried to ignore it, but it was hard. He felt self-conscious and alone. Tom, however, wouldn't stand for it. He confronted the bullies and defended his friend, telling them that Jerry was brave and strong. His words didn’t stop the bullying completely, but they made Jerry feel less alone. And in time, the bullies’ taunts faded away as Jerry continued to bravely battle his cancer. Months passed and Jerry’s condition improved. He regained his strength and the hair on his head started to grow back. Tom and Jerry’s friendship grew even stronger, and soon, Jerry was given the all-clear by his doctors. As the school year ended, Tom and Jerry reflected on their journey. They had faced something terrifying and unknown, but they had faced it together. And in that, they had found a new understanding of the world and their place in it. They had learned about strength, compassion, and the power of true friendship.

QUESTIONS ON SCENARIO 4



1. Why was Tom’s support so important to Jerry during his cancer treatment?
2. Why do you think the other kids at school bullied Jerry?
3. How do you think the experience of cancer changed Tom and Jerry’s friendship?
4. Do you think Jerry’s bravery and Tom’s support influenced the bullies to stop?
5. Do you think Tom’s act of shaving his own head in solidarity with Jerry was a powerful gesture? Why or why not?
6. Do you think Jerry’s journey with cancer taught him anything about life?
7. In your opinion, what is the greatest lesson Tom and Jerry learned from their experience?
8. Finally, how do you think Tom and Jerry’s bond could inspire others to be better friends to those in need?

SCENARIO 5

Once upon a time, there were four friends who loved football - Manchester United, Arsenal, Real Madrid and Barcelona. They often competed against each other, but they were always respectful and supportive of each other. One day, they were all invited to a special event, where they were to receive a special lesson about cancer. They were all curious and ready to learn.

The four friends gathered together in a special room where they were joined by a group of doctors and scientists. The doctors explained cancer and how it affects the body. They spoke about the different types of cancer, and how cancer is most often treated. The scientists then spoke about the latest research and developments in the field of cancer treatment.

The friends were amazed and felt a sense of responsibility to share this knowledge with others. They decided to start with their friends, parents, classmates and others. They were surprised by how many people were not aware about cancer at all. They started a campaign to spread the word about cancer, and how to prevent and treat it. They created and posted information on social media. They spoke to people at matches, at school, and at work. They even spoke to the media and were featured in newspapers and on television.

SCENARIO 5 (CONTINUED)

The response was overwhelming. People were shocked to learn about the prevalence of cancer, and how it can affect anyone, regardless of age or background. They were inspired by the boys' dedication to spreading awareness. The four friends continued to share what their knowledge and encourage people to seek out more information from reliable sources. They also reminded people that cancer is not something to be feared, but something to be fought against.

One day, the friends received a letter from the president of their country. The president had heard about their campaign and was impressed by their dedication. The boys were invited to the capital and honored for their work. When they arrived, they were greeted by the president himself, Mr Yanga. President Yanga thanked the boys for their efforts and presented them with awards. The four friends were overwhelmed by their president's generosity, and vowed to continue their work.



QUESTIONS ON SCENARIO 5

1. Do you think the four friends made a difference in their country?
2. What do you think about the way the four friends were treated by the media and the public?
3. How do you think the knowledge they shared could change the world?
4. Do you think the four friends' actions were admirable? What would you have done?

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