

BEEBE HEALTHCARE
MARGARET H. ROLLINS SCHOOL OF NURSING
NURSING 101 - FOUNDATIONS OF NURSING
COMMON CANCER TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
Adrenal Glands	Two small organs, near the kidneys, that release certain hormones important to many body processes.
Adrenalectomy	Surgical removal of the adrenal glands.
Alopecia	Loss of hair. This can result from disease as well as certain types of cancer treatments.
Anorexia	Loss of appetite. Many cancer patients lose their appetites because of their illness and/or therapies used to treat their illness.
Antiemetic	A medicine that prevents or controls vomiting or nausea.
Antineoplastic	A drug that kills or blocks the growth and/or spread of cancer cells.
Axillary Nodes	Lymph nodes found in the armpit (axilla).
Benign Tumor	An abnormal growth of tissue which does not spread from one body part to
Biopsy	The cutting out of a small piece of tissue for microscopic examination.
Breast Self-Examination	Monthly examination of breasts by a woman between regular physical checkups. This is recommended for all women. The ideal time for menstruating women is one week after the period; for women who have gone through their "change of life" or menopause, the first day of each month.
Bronchogenic	Originating in the bronchial tubes.
Cancer	A disease in which abnormal or malignant cells grow out of control and usually spread to other parts of the body.
Cancer In Situ	A small cancer that has not spread and is located on the surface of a tissue.
Carcinogen	A substance or agent which causes cancer.
Carcinoma	A kind of cancer which originates in the skin or membranes lining the interior of hollow organs, such as the lungs, intestines, uterus, breasts, etc. Adenocarcinoma - Cancer of glandular cells of the body. Basal Cell Carcinoma - The most common type of skin cancer. Bronchogenic Carcinoma - Cancer originating in the lungs or bronchi. Cervical Carcinoma - Cancer of the cervix or neck of the uterus. Endometrial Carcinoma - Cancer of the lining of the uterus. Large Cell Carcinoma - A type of bronchogenic carcinoma. Oat Cell or Small Cell Carcinoma - Another type of bronchogenic carcinoma. Squamous Cell Carcinoma - Cancer arising from the skin or the surfaces of other structures, such as the mouth, uterus, or bronchi.
Cervical Nodes	Lymph nodes in the neck.

TERM	DEFINITION
Chemotherapy	<p>The treatment of cancer with drugs.</p> <p>Adjuvant Chemotherapy - Chemotherapy used in conjunction with surgery, radiation therapy or both to destroy cancer cells that may be otherwise unaffected.</p> <p>Combination Chemotherapy - Simultaneous use of several drugs.</p>
Colostomy	Surgical connection of a section of the large intestine to the abdominal wall to create an artificial opening for the elimination of wastes. This procedure is done when part of the large intestine has been surgically removed and wastes can no longer be passed through the anus.
Cryosurgery	A special technique in which tissues are exposed to extreme cold, resulting in the destruction of the tissues.
Cytology	A science which studies cells under the microscope.
Cyst	An accumulation of fluid or semisolid material within a sac in the body.
Dysphagia	Difficulty and/or pain in swallowing.
Dysphonia	Difficulty and/or pain in speaking.
Edema	Accumulation of abnormal amounts of fluid in any body part.
Erythema	Redness of the skin.
Excision	Surgical removal (cutting out) of a part of the body.
Fistula	An abnormal passage between two internal organs or from an internal organ to the body's surface.
Guaiac Test	A chemical test to detect blood in the stool. It is used to screen patients for possible cancer of the colon or rectum.
Histology	Tissue examined under the microscope.
Hodgkin's Disease	A kind of cancer which affects the lymphatic system.
Ileostomy	Surgical creation of an opening between the lower portion of the small intestine and the abdominal wall for elimination of digestive wastes.
Immunotherapy	Artificial stimulation of the body's immune mechanism to treat or combat disease.
Irradiation	The use of x-rays for treating disease.
Lesion	An abnormal change in body tissue or organ due to a disease or injury.
Leukemia	Cancer of the blood-forming organs (bone marrow, lymph nodes, spleen) characterized by the presence of abnormal white blood cells, often in excessive numbers.
Lymphoma	A general term to describe cancer of the lymphatic system including Hodgkin's disease.
Malignant Tumor	A tumor made up of cancer cells. A tumor that will tend to invade surrounding tissue and spread to other parts of the body.

TERM	DEFINITION
Mammography	A low-dose x-ray examination of the breast to determine whether abnormal growths are present.
Mastectomy	Surgical removal of the breast. Segmental Mastectomy or Lumpectomy - Removal of a tumor of the breast. Simple Mastectomy - Removal of the entire breast. Radical Mastectomy - Removal of the entire breast plus underlying muscle tissue and lymph nodes of the armpit.
Melanoma	Cancer of pigment-forming cells, usually of the skin or the retina of the eye.
Metastasize	To spread from the original site.
Myeloma	A tumor of certain protein-making cells (plasma cells) located in the bone
Neoplasm	A new and abnormal growth of tissue or cells; a tumor; generally, a malignant tumor.
Neuroblastoma	A malignant tumor of the nervous system.
Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma	A cancer of the lymphatic system. One way that doctors classify the different lymphomas is by the type of cell that is involved. Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma is related to Hodgkin's, but is composed of different cell types.
Non-Invasive	A type of neoplasm which does not invade or destroy nearby tissues.
Oncology	The study of cancer and treatment of malignant disease. Doctors who specialize in oncology are called "Oncologists".
Osteoma	A benign tumor of bone.
Osteosarcoma	See "sarcoma".
Palliative Treatment	Treatment that relieves pain and symptoms of disease but which does not cure the disease.
Pap Smear	Microscopic examination of cells and fluids from the cervix and vagina. It is recommended that all women have a Pap smear at least once a year as this procedure is a simple and safe way to detect cancers of the cervix.
Pneumonectomy	Surgical removal of a lung or part of a lung.
Polyp	An overgrowth of tissue projecting into a body cavity.
Prosthesis	Artificial replacement for a body part.
Radiotherapy	The use of radiation for treatment of disease.
Remission	Complete or partial disappearance of a disease; the period during which a disease is under control.

TERM	DEFINITION
Sarcoma	<p>A malignant tumor of muscles and/or connective tissues such as bone and cartilage.</p> <p>Chondrosarcoma - A malignant tumor of cartilage usually occurring near the ends of the long bones.</p> <p>Ewing's Sarcoma - A malignant tumor arising in bone, affecting bones of the extremities. It often appears before age 20.</p> <p>Hemangiosarcoma - A malignant tumor of blood or lymph vessels.</p> <p>Osteosarcoma - A malignant tumor arising from bone-forming cells.</p> <p>Synovial Sarcoma - A malignant tumor of joint tissue (knee, wrist).</p> <p>Uterine Sarcoma - A malignant tumor of the muscle of the uterus.</p>
Tracheostomy	Surgical opening through the trachea (windpipe) in the neck to provide an artificial airway. This is often performed when the windpipe is blocked and a person cannot breathe.
Tumor	An abnormal swelling or enlargement of cells or tissues. Tumors may be benign or malignant.
Virus	A tiny infectious agent that is smaller than a bacterium.
Vulvectomy	Surgical excision of external female genitalia.
Wilm's tumor	A malignant growth of the kidney which usually affects young children.

Adapted from "Your Guide To Common Cancer Terms" from Adria Laboratories.