Cancer Treatment

Lesson 5
We will learn to explain to family and friends:

- Cancer treatments
- Difference between local and systemic treatment of cancer
- Why side effects commonly occur with cancer treatment
- Side effects
- Clinical trials
What is Treatment?

- The Team:
  Surgeons, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, and others

- Treatment Plan:
  Surgery, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, hormone therapy or biological therapies, or participation in a clinical trial
Treatment Depends On...

- Type of cancer
- Size & location of tumor
- Stage of disease
- Person’s general health
- Other factors
Local or systemic

• Local treatments:
  Affect cancer cells in the tumor and the area near it.
  • Surgery
  • Radiation therapy
• Systemic treatments:
  Travel through the bloodstream, reaching cancer cells all over the body.
  • Chemotherapy
  • Hormone therapy
  • Biological therapy
Side Effects

- Occur because cancer treatment damages healthy cells and tissues in addition to cancer cells.

- Depend mainly on the type and extent of the treatment.
Treatment Methods

- Surgery
- Chemotherapy
- Radiation Therapy
- Adjuvant Chemotherapy
- Hormonal Therapy
- Immunotherapy
Surgery

• Very effective in treating localized cancer.

• Localized cancer can be cured by surgery.
Chemotherapy

• Very effective in some cancers.

• Can cure some cancers which have spread throughout body, such as:
  - Leukemia
  - Lymphoma
  - Cancer of testis
Chemotherapy

- Partially effective in some cancers.
- Can cause some cancers to go away temporarily:
  - Colon cancer
  - Lung cancer
  - Breast cancer
Adjuvant Chemotherapy

• Chemotherapy is given after surgery to decrease the chance of cancer coming back.

• Chemotherapy is effective in:
  - Breast cancer
  - Colon cancer
Radiation Therapy

- Beam with machine.
- Very effective in treating localized cancer, whether for cure or symptom relief.
- Very effective in treating cancer which is causing pain or pressure.
Hormone Therapy

• Some cancers depend on the body’s hormones to grow, such as
  - Breast cancer
  - Prostate cancer

• Anti-hormone treatment can cause these cancers to go away or be controlled for a time.
Hormones

- Hormones are chemicals produced by glands of the body.
- Hormones travel in the blood stream to other parts of the body to perform a function.
- Female hormone (estrogen) affects the uterus and breasts.
- Male hormone (testosterone) affects the prostate gland.
Biological Therapy (Immunotherapy)

- Helps the body’s natural ability (immune system) to fight disease or protects the body from some of the side effects of cancer treatment.

- Treatments which stimulate the immune system of the body to fight cancer cells.
Immune System of the Body

• The body has ways to protect itself against attack by bacteria, viruses, cancer cells, and chemicals.

• The immune system consists of:
  - Antibodies and other body chemicals
  - White blood cells
  - Lymphocytes
Did we cover...

- Cancer treatments?
- Difference between local and systemic treatment of cancer?
- Why side effects commonly occur with cancer treatment?
- Side effects that occur as a result of cancer treatment?
- Clinical trials
For more information:

- National Cancer Institute’s Cancer Information Service
  1-800-4-CANCER

- TTY service
  1-800-332-8615

- LiveHelp via www.cancer.gov

- Smoking Quitline of the National Cancer Institute
  1-877-44U-QUIT
For more information:

- American Cancer Society
  1-800-ACS-2345
  www.cancer.org