



TRANSCRIPT

What is cancer?

This video has been designed to answer the question "What is cancer?"

Our body. Our body is made up of millions and millions of tiny building blocks known as cells. When we are well, this is because all the cells are working as they should. Cells are able to do their jobs because every cell in our body contains a complete set of instructions in the form of genes. In a cell, there are thousands of genes packed inside its nucleus.

Sometimes the genes in the cell become changed or altered in some way. These changes may be described as variants or mutations. Most such changes are harmless and do not affect the normal working of the cell. But sometimes, although very rarely, a change in a gene or group of genes turns a normal cell into a cancer cell.

A cancer cell is different from normal cells in a few important ways. A cancer cell grows and divides without regard to other cells forming a mass or 'tumour'; this can damage the neighbouring cells. A cancer cell also draws food and energy from the body for itself; this can result in tiredness, weight loss and weakness. Finally, cancer cells can spread to other parts of the body; this results in additional tumour deposits.

A cancer has many different effects on the body such as, a lump or mass, pain, weight loss and weakness. For this reason, the treatment of cancer requires a team of several different types of healthcare professionals who work together to form a multidisciplinary team or MDT.

The changes that cause cancer can occur in any one of the millions of cells in our body. A cancer that arises in the cells that form the lining of the womb is known as womb cancer or endometrial carcinoma.

You can find out more about womb cancer by viewing our other videos included within this series. Thanks for watching.