



YOUR BENEFITS:

Did You Know...

When It Comes to Fighting Cancer, Early Detection is Key

Cancer. Just hearing the word can strike fear in many of us, and for good reason. While diagnostic and treatment options have come a long way over the last 50 years, it's still the #2 cause of death in the U.S. The good news is a significant amount of new cancers are treatable if they are caught in their early stages. Learn how to detect cancer early by identifying major early symptoms.

Here are five symptoms that you should take seriously and seek medical attention. All of these could be caused by conditions other than cancer, so if you have one of these symptoms, don't panic. But don't ignore it, either. Tell your doctor as soon as you notice the symptom.

- **Persistent cough** — If accompanied by blood-tinged saliva, a persistent cough may be a sign of cancer. If you spot a little blood in your saliva when you cough, or have a cough that lasts more than a month, it could be a sign of lung, neck, or head cancer.
- **Blood in Stool** — Blood in stool could be an indication of colon cancer, as tumors can grow in the digestive tract and cause pressure.
- **Changes in warts and moles** — If you have unusual or frequent changes in any skin growth, particularly warts or moles, including the sudden appearance of one, it might be a sign of skin cancer. These changes include bleeding and irregular edges. Larger moles should always be checked by a doctor, as they are at a higher risk of becoming cancer than smaller moles.
- **Lumps** — About ninety percent of men with testicular cancer have a slightly uncomfortable or painless lump on a testicle. Similarly, many breast cancers are diagnosed early by the detection of a lump on or in the breast.
- **Changes in urine** — A sudden shift in the frequency, color, or smell of urine may be a sign of bladder cancer. Changes in urine to watch out for include frequent urination, blood in the urine, slow flow, a change in bladder function, or only small amounts of urine even with an increased amount of pressure.

If you experience any of these symptoms, tell your doctor right away. And check out Kaiser Permanente's tips on cancer prevention. Visit www.tusd.org/benefits for details. You **can** do it!

The information provided here is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment for specific medical conditions. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease without consulting with a qualified health care provider.

