

Facilitator Guide



INDUCTION PROGRAMME

AN INTRODUCTION TO CANCER CARE FOR NURSES





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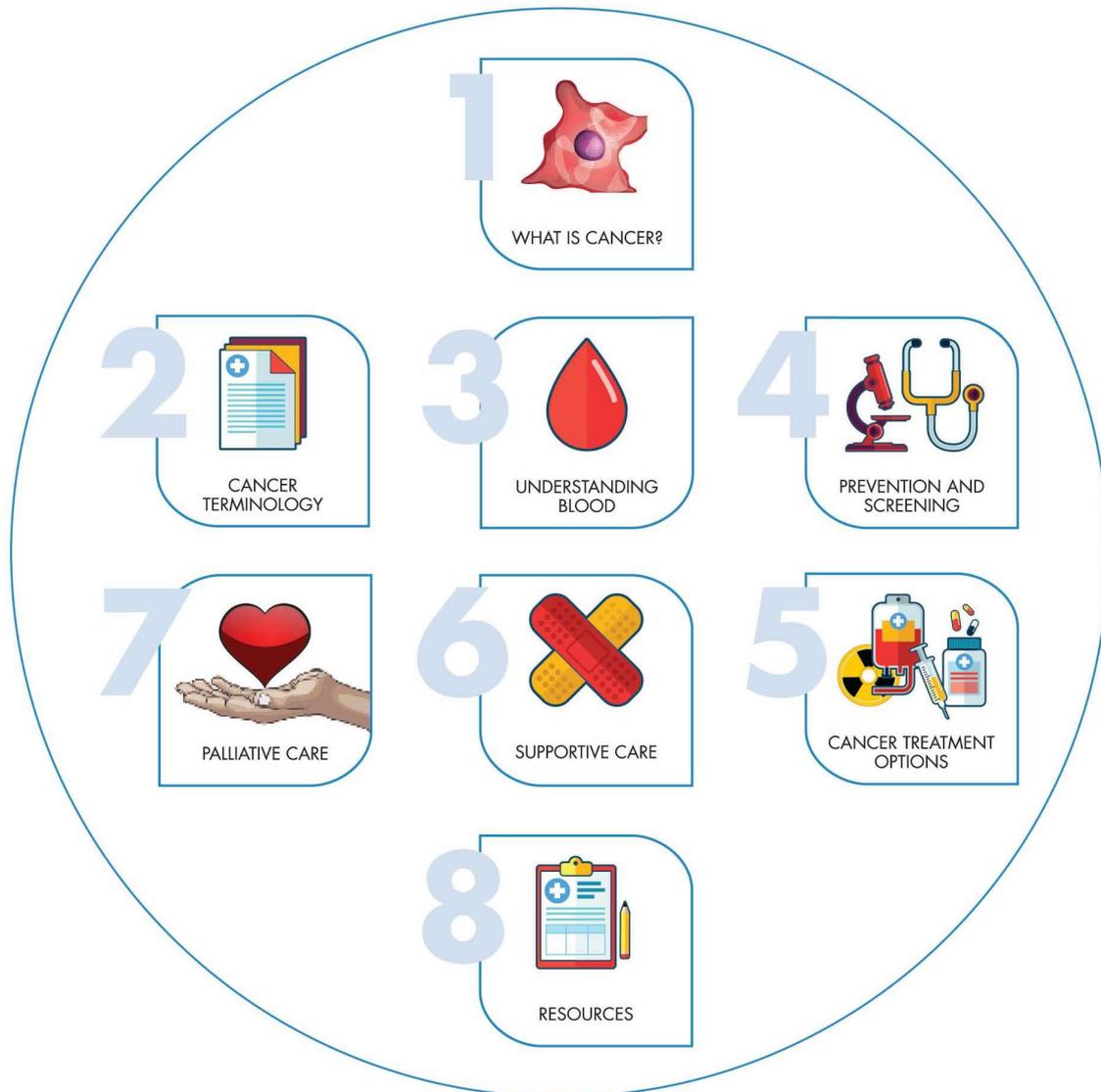


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Programme map

The programme map, below, gives an overview of the different components of this induction programme.

As you will see, there are 8 chapters:



Chapter 1: What is cancer?

By the end of this chapter you should be able to:

- define cancer
- explain how normal cells function
- explain how abnormal cells function
- compare normal and abnormal cell function
- identify factors that contribute to cancer



Understanding cancer

What about abnormal cells?

The process whereby normal cells are transformed into cancer cells is called **carcinogenesis**. This is a multi-step process, which can take years to complete.

When cancer develops, the orderly cell replication process is compromised. The defects within the DNA mean that cancer cells are not governed by the signals that regulate cell growth and this may lead to uncontrolled proliferation (elevated levels of production).

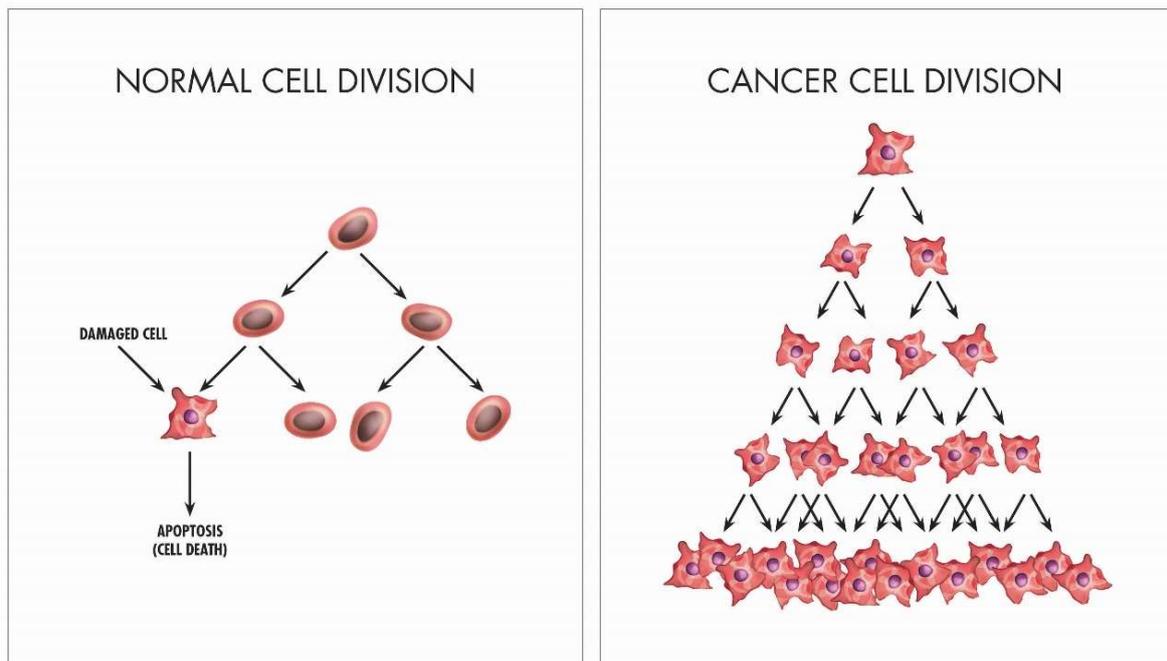


Figure 6: Cell division

Characteristics of cancer cells

Cancer cells have the following characteristics:

- They do not respond to apoptosis signals and can live for longer than a normal cell and even become immortal.
- They invade surrounding tissues without restraint. The cancer cells lack contact inhibition, which means that they do not stop dividing when they touch neighbouring tissue.
- They easily detach from one another.
- The cell cycle may be overridden, resulting in uncontrolled cell growth with no resting phase.
- Cancer cells lose their intended function as adult cells and behave in an inappropriate manner.



In this chapter, you have looked at normal and abnormal cells. By understanding how normal cells look and function, you can better understand what happens with cancer and how cancer spreads in the body. Finally, we looked at factors that may contribute to cancer development – environmental, immune dysfunction, sex hormones and a genetic predisposition.

Test your knowledge



The self-assessment that follows is for learners to complete when they review this chapter on their own. This self-assessment will assist learners in preparing for the post-induction test.

1. What is cancer? [Define cancer].

Model answer: Cancer is a group of diseases. These diseases have abnormal cell growth in common. Cancer is a non-communicable disease.

2.	Mitosis is:
A.	Cell division.
B.	Cell suicide.
C.	Cell specialisation.

Circle the correct response:

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C

Model answer: A

3.	The cell cycle
A.	During the M phase cell division takes place.
B.	During the M phase the cell is most vulnerable to damage.
C.	G₀ is the resting phase.

