



Mythbusters: Fact or Fiction?

Myth #1: "CANCER IS A VIRUS."

This is true/false because: _____

Myth #2: "A SIDE EFFECT OF CANCER IS HAIR LOSS."

This is true/false because: _____

Myth #3: "THE RISK OF DYING FROM CANCER IN THE U.S. IS INCREASING."

This is true/false because: _____

Myth #4: "THE ONLY KIND OF CANCER CAUSED BY SMOKING IS LUNG CANCER."

This is true/false because: _____

Myth #5: "EMOTIONAL SUPPORT CAN BE JUST AS IMPORTANT AS MEDICAL SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH CANCER AS WELL AS THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS."

This is true/false because: _____

CANCER FACTS & TERMS

CANCER develops when abnormal cells in a part of the body begin to grow out of control. There are over 100 kinds of cancers. Cancer is not contagious and can often be treated.

TREATMENT can include surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy, among others. Treatment can cause side effects such as mouth sores, weight gain or loss, hair loss, nausea, and fatigue.

ONCOLOGY: The science that deals with cancer. A doctor who treats people with cancer is called an ONCOLOGIST.

REMISSION: A period in which the cancer is not detectable. Remission can last any amount of time; it can even last forever.

METASTASIS: A piece of cancer breaks from the original site and travels to a different part of the body.

TUMOR: A group of cells that form a lump or bump. A tumor that is cancerous is considered malignant. A benign tumor is not cancerous.

RECURRENCE: Sometimes someone is treated for cancer and the cancer goes away completely for awhile but then comes back. When this happens, the cancer that returns is called a recurrence.

PROGNOSIS: The doctors' best guess at how well a sick person will do. The prognosis gives you some idea of how serious the illness is; it never tells you what is definitely going to happen. Some people who have been told that their prognosis is bad end up doing fine, and sometimes people with a good prognosis get better but then get sick again, or don't get better at all.

Some cancer terms and definitions come from When a Parent Has Cancer: A Guide to Caring for Your Children by Wendy Schlessel Harpham, M.D. Copyright © 1997 by Wendy S. Harpham, M.D. Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.