A FOCUS ON

Cancer in Teenagers in South Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>±10 million</th>
<th>18.5%</th>
<th>10-19 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the number of teenagers in SA</td>
<td>of the SA population</td>
<td>age group of teenagers in SA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Detection of cancer in teenagers

Cancers are often found LATE as teenagers adapt to changes in their physical appearance and cope with an active lifestyle. The first warning signs may be MISSED and assumed as normal growing up or sporting injuries.

- It is projected that an annual rate of 900-2500 new childhood cancers would be diagnosed with the cause of most childhood and teenage cancers still unknown.
- An estimated two out of three children with cancer in SA don't reach an appropriate specialised treatment centre, and many who do, present with advanced cancer.
- Teenagers are under-represented in the National Cancer Registry and the SA Children's Cancer Registry. So the true incidence is not known but is certainly higher.
- Since there is no screening available to this age group we must rely on early detection by being aware of signs and symptoms and prompt effective treatment to ensure improved survival outcomes.

Sept 2019
# Cancer in Teenagers in South Africa

## Leading Cancers in SA Teens

**National Cancer Registry 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANCER</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lymphomas</strong></td>
<td>Lymphomas start in immune system cells called lymphocytes / lymph nodes &amp; -tissues, like tonsils/thymus (a small organ in front of heart). Can affect bone marrow &amp; other organs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Hodgkin’s - 15.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hodgkin’s - 8.9% of overall cancers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sarcomas</strong></td>
<td>Sarcomas are cancers that start in connective tissue such as muscles, bones or fat cells. Two main types: Bone (Osteosarcoma and Ewing sarcoma most common) &amp; Soft tissue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bone - 12.9% &amp; soft tissue cancer - 7.1% of overall cancers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brain tumours</strong></td>
<td>Brain tumours can be either benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous). If benign it often press on the brain but don’t usually spread into surrounding tissue but can cause long-lasting changes. Malignant brain tumours can spread from where started into surrounding brain tissue, causing pressure &amp; problems Can also spread through the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) into other parts of brain/spinal cord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3% of overall cancers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kaposi Sarcoma (KS)</strong></td>
<td>KS is an HIV-related cancer that causes patches of abnormal tissue to grow under the skin, in the lining of the mouth, nose and throat or in other organs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1% of overall cancers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leukaemia</strong></td>
<td>Leukaemia are cancers of the bone marrow &amp; blood - most common cancers in children, but can occur at any age. In adolescents it is usually acute (fast growing) types such as acute lymphocytic leukaemia (ALL) and acute myelogenous leukaemia (AML).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.9% of overall cancers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# A Focus on Cancer in Teenagers in South Africa

## Leading Cancers in SA Teens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANCER</th>
<th>SIGNS &amp; SYMPTOMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lymphomas</td>
<td>Enlarged lymph nodes, swollen belly, feeling full after small amount of food, shortness of breath/cough, fever, weight loss, night sweats, feeling very tired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarcomas</td>
<td>Bone pain, can include lumps, swelling or bowel problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brain tumours</td>
<td>Headaches &amp; vomiting (usually in mornings), fits (seizures), irritation/losing interest in day-to-day stuff, eye problems such as blurring/seeing double, feeling more sleepy or drowsy than usual, changes in balance &amp; walking, weakness down one side of body, problems with speech, personality changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaposi Sarcoma (KS)</td>
<td>Spots/patches of skin darker than surrounding areas, hyperpigmented (purplish-brownish) cutaneous lesions, usually papules &amp; raised, oral lesions on the palate, advanced KS may present with fungating lesions, swelling is usually seen in the extremities / pubic area, non-tender, firm, noticeably larger lymph nodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leukaemia</td>
<td>Tiredness, weakness, pale skin, bleeding or bruising, fever, weight loss, bone and joint pain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Risks & Symptoms

► People living with (human immunodeficiency virus) HIV are at a higher risk of certain cancers including Kaposi Sarcoma (KS) and Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma

► With adolescents becoming sexually active at a younger age, it is important that teenagers are aware that the agent causing the Kaposi’s sarcoma-associated herpesvirus (KSHV) is spread mainly via saliva (deep oral kissing, oral sex, mastication of food-parent to child transmission) as well as sexually

► With the alarming rise in HIV prevalence, KS has become not only the most common HIV-related cancer in Africa but also one of the most common overall childhood cancers

► Adolescents and young adults need to discuss their symptoms with a health care professional

► If symptoms persist, seek a second opinion, it’s your right

► Late diagnosis leads to longer treatment, more disabilities and often lower survival rates

“I want people to know that cancer is not a death sentence”.
- Girl aged 15, Leukaemia, Howick, KZN
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in South Africa

Saint Siluan Warning Signs
for Childhood & Teenage Cancer

Seek medical help early for ongoing symptoms
White spot in the eye, new squint, sudden blindness or bulging eyeball
Lump on the stomach, pelvis, head, arms, legs, testicle or glands
Unexplained - fever present for over 2 weeks, weight loss, fatigue, pale appearance, easy bruising & bleeding
Aching bones, joints, back, easy fractures
Neurological signs, a change in walk, balance or speech, contiguous headaches with/without vomiting, enlarged head

Cansa
Cancer Association of South Africa
Research • Educate • Support

www.cansa.org.za
TOLL FREE 0800 22 66 22
072 197 9305
071 867 3530

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How CANSA makes a difference

Cansa’s Tough Living with Cancer (TLC) children’s support programme embraces a holistic approach to include the emotional and social well-being of parents (guardians), children / teens and their siblings. CANSA TLC also offers support to the child who has a parent or sibling that has been diagnosed with cancer who sometimes has become a caregiver.

We offer the following services*
▶ sharing cancer related information
▶ counselling services and support groups
▶ providing terminal and grief support
▶ volunteer training
▶ hospital support and ward programmes
▶ prosthetic assistance (loss of an eye or limb)
▶ ports (broviacs) to minimise trauma and other medical equipment
▶ school and community awareness and education programmes
▶ providing accommodation for parents (guardians) near treatment centres at our CANSA TLC Lodges – Polokwane, Pretoria, Durban
▶ providing food & basic essentials parcels to families in need
▶ questions to ask when visiting health care professional, on CANSA website

*Please note that services will vary in different provinces

“Life forced me to be strong at a very young age. Having a support system as your family and friends is important. I wish the world could have more fathers like Chief, those who will support you every step of the way.” - Girl, diagnosed with Leukaemia at 15, now 22. Mangaung