

The cancer symptoms you should never ignore

STAR HEALTH DESK

Cancer, also called malignancy, is an abnormal growth of cells. There are more than 100 types of cancer. Symptoms vary depending on the type. Cancer treatment may include chemotherapy, radiation, and/or surgery. Constant bloating or a nagging cough — you might not think of these as warning signs of cancer, but they can be.

Changes in the skin
A new spot on your skin or one that changes size, shape or colour could be a sign of skin cancer. If you have any unusual marks, have your doctor check your skin.

Nagging cough
If you don't smoke, there is very little chance a nagging cough is a sign of cancer. But if yours does not go away or you cough up blood — especially if you are a smoker — see your doctor.

Breast changes
Most breast changes are not cancer. It is still important, though, to tell your doctor about them and have her check them out. Let the doctor know about any lumps, nipple changes or discharge, redness or thickening, or pain in your breasts.

Bloating
You may have a full, bloated feeling because of your diet or even stress. But if it does not get



better or you also have fatigue, weight loss or back pain, have it checked out. Constant bloating in women may be a sign of ovarian cancer.

Problems when you pee
Many men have urinary issues as they get older. Usually, these are signs of an enlarged prostate, but they could also mean prostate cancer.

Swollen lymph nodes
You have these small, bean-shaped glands in your neck,

armpits, and other places in your body. Some cancers like lymphoma and leukemia can cause swelling of lymph nodes.

Blood when you use toilet
Bloody stool is likely to come from swollen, inflamed veins called haemorrhoids, but there is a chance it could be colon cancer.

Testicle changes
A painless lump is the most common sign of testicular cancer.

Trouble swallowing
The common cold, acid reflux, or

even some medicine can make it hard to swallow once in a while. If it does not get better with time or with antacids, see a doctor. Trouble swallowing can also be a sign of cancer in your throat or esophagus.

Unusual vaginal bleeding
Bleeding that is not part of your usual period can have many causes, like fibroids or even some types of birth control. But tell your doctor if you are bleeding between periods, after sex or have bloody discharge.

Mouth issues
From bad breath to canker sores, most changes in your mouth are not serious. But if you have white or red patches or sores in your mouth that don't heal after a couple of weeks — especially if you smoke — see a doctor. It may be a sign of oral cancer.

Weight loss
Of course you can slim down when you change the way you eat or exercise. It can also happen if you have other issues, like stress or a thyroid problem. But it is not normal to lose 10 pounds or more without trying. There is a chance it could be a first sign of cancer of the pancreas, stomach, oesophagus or lungs.

Fever
A fever is not usually a bad thing. But one that does not go away and does not have an obvious cause could be a sign of a blood cancer like leukemia or lymphoma.

Fatigue
A lot of things can make you very tired and most of them are not serious. But fatigue is one early sign of some cancers, like leukemia. Some colon and stomach cancers can cause blood loss that you cannot see, which can make you feel very tired.

Source: WebMD

DID YOU KNOW?

Viral hepatitis kills as many as Aids or TB

Viral hepatitis is one of the leading killers across the globe, with a death toll that matches Aids or tuberculosis, research in the Lancet suggests, reports BBC.

The report estimates that hepatitis infections and their complications led to 1.45m deaths in 2013 — despite the existence of vaccines and treatments.

World Health Organisation (WHO) data shows there were 1.2m Aids-related deaths in 2014, while TB led to 1.5m deaths. The WHO has put forward a global strategy to tackle hepatitis.

Viral hepatitis refers to five different forms of virus (known as A, B, C, D, E) — some can be spread through contact with infected bodily fluids and others (A and E) through contaminated food or water.

Most deaths worldwide are due to B and C, which can cause serious liver damage and predispose people to liver cancer. But because people don't always feel the symptoms of the initial infection, they can be unaware of the long-term damage until it is too late.

Scientists from Imperial College London and the University of Washington examined data from 183 countries (between 1990 and 2013) found the number of deaths linked to viral hepatitis rose by more than 60% over two decades — partly due to a growing population. Deaths from diseases such as TB and malaria have dropped.

The study suggests the problem is biggest in East Asia. But unlike many other diseases, deaths from viral hepatitis were higher in high and middle income countries than in lower income nations.

The WHO says countries and organisations will need to expand vaccination programmes, focus on preventing mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B and increase access to treatment for hepatitis B

HEALTH bulletin

Global conference sets health action agenda

STAR HEALTH REPORT

Participants attending the Second Global Conference on Health and Climate, hosted by the Government of France, COP21 presidency, proposed key actions for the implementation of the Paris agreement to reduce health risks linked to climate change.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that climate change is already causing tens of thousands of deaths every year. These deaths arise from more frequent epidemics of diseases like cholera, the vastly expanded geographical distribution of diseases like dengue, and from extreme weather events, like heat waves and floods.

At the same time, nearly 7 million people each year die from diseases caused by air pollution, such as lung cancer and stroke.

Experts predict that, by 2030, climate change will cause an additional 2,50,000 deaths each year from malaria, diarrhoeal disease, heat stress and undernutrition alone.

The heaviest burden will fall on children, women, older people and the poor, further widening existing health inequalities between and within populations.

The conference highlighted the benefits of switching to cleaner energy sources. These will help reduce levels of climate and air pollutants, as well as providing desperately needed power for health

facilities in low-income countries. The health sector should themselves make a greater effort to promote low-carbon healthcare facilities and technologies; these can simultaneously improve service delivery and reduce costs as well as climate and environmental impacts.

The participants called for countries to adopt a new approach to link health economics assessment and climate change, for example, by calculating the avoided healthcare costs, when countries invest in mitigation of climate emissions, and protection from climate risks.

To develop this work, WHO announced a new working group which will articulate a new coherent approach to health economics and climate change. To do so, it is recommended that countries spend more on protecting health from risks linked to climate, such as extreme weather events and outbreaks of infectious disease and in cleaner energy sources, more sustainable transport systems and urban planning that also reduces major health risks, for example air pollution in cities and in the home. Recommendations also focus on scaling up financing on climate change and health through additional resources and mechanisms and existing resources earmarked for adaptation.

Source: World Health Organisation



Zika Outbreak

The mosquito menace and our duties

The mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*, is causing widespread fear by spreading the Zika virus that has been linked to thousands of babies being born with birth defects. So what do we know about it?

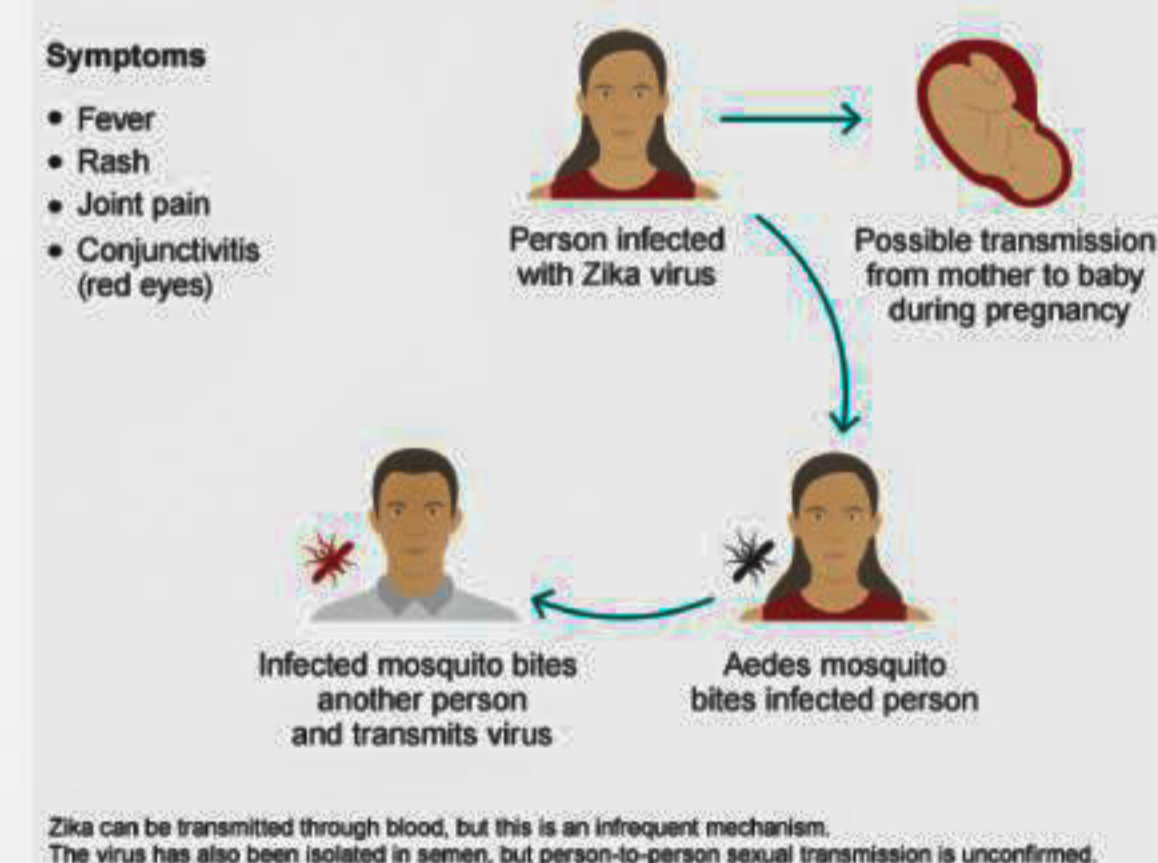


It does not need natural water sources to breed as it can lay eggs in the small and plentiful pools of stagnant water, such as gutters or flower pots, found in cities.

Zika is currently getting all the attention, but *Aedes aegypti* has long been known as the yellow fever mosquito. Yellow fever is a viral disease that can cause jaundice, bleeding and multiple organ failure in some cases.

390 million people are infected with the dengue virus each year, largely as a result of bites from *Aedes aegypti*.

Zika virus transmission cycle



Zika can be transmitted through blood, but this is an infrequent mechanism. The virus has also been isolated in semen, but person-to-person sexual transmission is unconfirmed.



PHOTO: BBC

Arun Patel's nose was badly damaged and disfigured when he suffered from pneumonia as a baby.

Indian doctors grow new nose on boy's forehead

Doctors in India have replaced a 12-year-old boy's damaged nose with a new one which was grown on his forehead.

Arun Patel's nose was badly damaged and disfigured when he suffered from pneumonia as a baby. The infection damaged the cartilage of his nose, making it difficult for doctors to fix it.

A similar operation was carried out in China in 2013 where a man who had damaged his nose in a traffic accident was given a new one.

Arun's parents took him to a doctor in their village in the central state of Madhya Pradesh when he suffered from pneumonia soon after his birth. But the treatment made his condition worse.

More than a decade later, a team of doctors in Indore city decided to conduct a rare four-phased plastic surgery to give Arun a new nose.

ACT AT ONCE-DELAY IS SERIOUS

First Aid for Kitchen Burns

If despite your best efforts, you or a family member suffers a burn in the kitchen, follow these first aid tips:

- Run cool water over the burned area, soak it in cool water (not ice water) or cover it with a clean, cold, wet towel.
- Cover the burn with a sterile bandage or a clean cloth.
- Protect the burn from pressure and friction.
- Use over-the-counter medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen for pain.
- Do not apply butter, ice, fluffy cotton dressing, adhesive bandages, cream, oil spray, or any household remedy to a burn.
- If a burn appears to be severe or you develop signs of infection, call your doctor.



Of the many types of burns that can happen in your home, scalds may be the most unexpected. Thousands of people are injured each year by hot liquids and many of them are young children. Children have thinner skin than adults and are more likely to receive severe burns from hot liquid. Simple precautions can protect you & your family from scalding burns