



# Cancer

*fact sheet*

Cancer  
AnswerLine™

## POTENTIAL SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF CANCER

Signs and symptoms are both signals of injury, illness, disease - signals that something is not right in the body. A signal can be seen by someone else. A symptom is a signal that's felt or noticed by the person who has it, but may not be easily seen by anyone else. Treatment works best when cancer is found early - while it's still small and is less likely to have spread to other parts of the body.



### CANCER WARNING SIGNS - CAUTION

- **Change in bowel or bladder habits, abdominal pain**  
Constipation, diarrhea or a change in the size of your stool can be a sign of colorectal cancer. Blood in the urine can be a sign of bladder or kidney cancer.
- **A sore that doesn't heal**  
Skin cancer may bleed and look like sores that don't heal.
- **Unusual bleeding or discharge**  
Coughing up blood may be a sign of lung cancer. Blood in the stool could be a sign of colon or rectal cancer. Abnormal vaginal bleeding can be a sign of cervical or endometrial cancer. Bloody discharge from the nipple may be a sign of breast cancer.
- **Thickening or a lump, in the breast or elsewhere on your body**  
Many cancers can be felt through the skin such as breast, testicle, lymph nodes and the soft tissues of the body.
- **Indigestion or swallowing problems (chronic)**  
These problems may be signs of esophagus, stomach or throat cancer.
- **Obvious change in a wart or mole**  
Any wart, mole or freckle that changes in color, size or shape or loses its sharp border should be seen by a doctor.
- **Nagging cough, hoarseness or shortness of breath**  
A persistent cough could be a sign of lung cancer. Hoarseness can be a sign of cancer of the thyroid or throat.

If any of these symptoms are present, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact your physician to make an appointment for an evaluation.



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## SCREENING RESOURCES AT U-M

- **Lung Cancer Screening Clinic** 248-305-4400  
[uofmhealth.org/medical-services/pulmonary/lung-cancer-screening-clinic](http://uofmhealth.org/medical-services/pulmonary/lung-cancer-screening-clinic)
- **Cancer Genetics Clinic** 734-763-2532  
[mcancer.org/cancer-genetics/clinic](http://mcancer.org/cancer-genetics/clinic)
- **Colonoscopy and Colon Cancer Screening** 877-758-2626 or 734-936-9250  
[uofmhealth.org/medical-services/digestive-and-liver-health/screening-colonoscopy](http://uofmhealth.org/medical-services/digestive-and-liver-health/screening-colonoscopy)
- **Breast Imaging (Mammography)** 734-936-4500  
[mcancer.org/breast-cancer/mammograms](http://mcancer.org/breast-cancer/mammograms)

## HELPFUL WEBSITES

- U-M Cancer Screening  
[mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/screening](http://mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/screening)
- U-M Skin Cancer Self-Screening Card  
[mcancer.org/skin-cancer/melanoma/prevention/self-screening-card](http://mcancer.org/skin-cancer/melanoma/prevention/self-screening-card)
- U-M Breast Cancer Screening  
[mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/breast-cancer](http://mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/breast-cancer)
- U-M Colon Cancer Screening  
[mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/colon-cancer](http://mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/colon-cancer)
- U-M Cervical Cancer Screening  
[mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/cervical](http://mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/cervical)
- U-M Prostate Cancer Screening  
[mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/prostate-cancer](http://mcancer.org/cancer-prevention/prostate-cancer)
- American Cancer Society, Signs and Symptoms of Cancer  
[cancer.org/cancer/cancerbasics/signs-and-symptoms-of-cancer](http://cancer.org/cancer/cancerbasics/signs-and-symptoms-of-cancer)
- National Cancer Institute, Cancer Screening Overview  
[cancer.gov/about-cancer/screening/patient-screening-overview-pdq](http://cancer.gov/about-cancer/screening/patient-screening-overview-pdq)



If you have any questions about cancer screening, signs or symptoms please call the Cancer AnswerLine™ to speak with an experienced oncology nurse at 1-800-865-1125 or contact via email at [OPE-CancerAnswerLine@med.umich.edu](mailto:OPE-CancerAnswerLine@med.umich.edu).