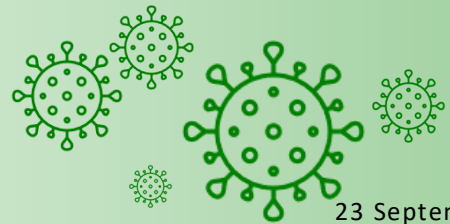




COVID CORNER

Exploring the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on our lives



23 September 2022

COVID-19 & cancer

24 SEPTEMBER IS WORLD CANCER RESEARCH DAY

Can COVID-19 cause cancer?

Whether or not COVID-19 infection increases the risk of cancer in those who have had no cancer previously is unclear. However, there is evidence of breast cancer cells being reactivated after severe COVID-19 disease.

Further studies are required to confirm the link between COVID-19 and cancer recurrence.

Can COVID vaccines cause cancer?

No. None of the vaccines can alter your DNA in any way, and therefore cannot cause cancer.

The myth that the mRNA vaccine could inactivate the genes that suppress tumours is just that: a myth. Messenger RNA (mRNA) is not the same as DNA and cannot be combined with DNA to change your genetic code.

The mRNA vaccines use a tiny piece of the coronavirus' genetic code to teach your immune system how to trigger an immune response if you get infected. The mRNA does not enter the nucleus of your cells — the part that contains your DNA.

Does cancer increase your COVID-19 risk?

Yes. If you have cancer, you have a higher risk of severe COVID-19. This is because cancer and its treatment can lower your ability to fight infection.

People with blood cancers may be at higher risk of prolonged infection and death from COVID-19 because they often have lower levels of immune cells that produce antibodies against viruses.

It is especially important that cancer patients get the COVID vaccine.

The biggest impact of COVID on cancer

The pandemic has resulted in many cancers going undetected. People delayed their usual health checks during the lockdown. Now, due to the ongoing economic impact of COVID-19, many have lost their jobs and health insurance and feel they are unable to seek help.

Unfortunately, this has resulted in patients not being diagnosed as early as they could have been. Early detection of cancer is extremely important as the sooner you begin treatment, the better your chance of recovery.



cancer 1. a malignant growth or tumour, caused by abnormal and uncontrolled cell division; 2. the disease resulting from this; 3. an evil influence that spreads dangerously. [Latin: crab, creeping tumour]- cancerous adj

Fast Facts

- COVID vaccines do not cause cancer. None of the vaccines alter your DNA in any way, therefore it is impossible for them to cause cancer.
- Cancer can increase your risk of severe COVID disease. It is important to be vaccinated if you are a cancer patient in order to support your immune system.
- Early detection of cancer is extremely important as the sooner you begin treatment, the better your chance of recovery.

Want to find out more?

Cancer Association of South Africa:

<https://cansa.org.za/>

COVID-19—information cancer patients should know:

<https://cansa.org.za/covid-19-what-cancer-patients-should-know/>

Fact check—7 myths about COVID-19 vaccines:

<https://www.mskcc.org/coronavirus/myths-about-covid-19-vaccines>

South African cancer statistics:

<https://www.nicd.ac.za/centres/national-cancer-registry/>

Ask Dr M

Do you still have questions?

Call us on

0800 24 36 72

or WhatsApp

082 735 4472



Protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19 with the two Vs:



Vaccination

Ventilation

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