

FACT OR FICTION?

There are a lot of myths surrounding cancer that are simply not true. Do you know the facts? Sort or label the following statements as true or false.

A The earlier someone gets treated for their cancer, the better.

B Cancer is contagious.

C Cancer is much more common among older people.

D There are 12 different types of cancer.

E Cancer makes your hair fall out.

F Cancer cannot be treated. It's incurable.

G A benign tumour isn't cancer. A malignant tumour is cancer.

H The number of people living with cancer in the UK is increasing.

I It's best not to talk about cancer. It's uncomfortable and depressing.

FACT OR FICTION? THE ANSWERS

A

The earlier someone gets treated for their cancer, the better. TRUE

If a cancer is diagnosed and treated early, the person has a better chance of being cured. This is because the cancer has not had time to spread far.

B

Cancer is contagious. FALSE

Cancer is not contagious which means you can't catch it from someone else.

C

Cancer is much more common among older people. TRUE

Cancer can affect anyone, but it mainly affects older people. Nearly 9 out of 10 (89%) of people who get cancer are over the age of 50.

D

There are 12 different types of cancer. FALSE

There are more than 200 types of cancer. Cancer can occur in any part of the body.

E

Cancer makes your hair fall out. FALSE

Cancer does not cause hair loss. But some cancer treatments can cause side effects including hair loss. Any hair lost during the treatment will almost always grow back, sometimes a different texture or colour.

F

Cancer cannot be treated. It's incurable. FALSE

Treatments for cancer are often very successful. Many people recover completely and go on to live normal lives.

G

A benign tumour is non-cancerous. A malignant tumour is cancerous. TRUE

A benign tumour isn't cancer and can often be removed easily through surgery. Cancer is the name given to a malignant tumour.

H

The number of people living with cancer in the UK is increasing. TRUE

With treatments improving and the population ageing, more people are living with the illness than ever before – 2.5 million and counting.

I

It's best not to talk about cancer. It's uncomfortable and depressing. DISCUSS

Certainly some people find it hard to talk about a serious illness like cancer. On the other hand, cancer is a part of everyday life. And the more we talk about it, the more we understand. Sometimes not talking about something can make it seem scarier and lead to confusion. What do you think?