

# Cancer in Children: Your Child's Healthcare Team

A team of specialists will help manage your child's care. You and your child will work closely with them. They will help you make choices about your child's treatment. They will help you and your child cope. They can answer your questions.



## Team members

These people may help care for your child:

- **Anesthesiologist.** This is a doctor who uses medicine to help your child sleep and not feel pain during procedures.
- **Child life specialist.** This provider is trained in child development. They study how children react to illness and being in the hospital. This person helps you and your child cope while your child is in the hospital.
- **Clinical nurse specialist (CNS) and nurse practitioner (NP).** These nurses have advanced training to care for children with cancer. They may help the doctor manage your child's symptoms. They may help adjust medicines and give exams. They will teach and support you, your child, and your family.
- **Family doctor or pediatrician.** This doctor is the primary care provider. They have likely followed your child over the years for general healthcare. They may have been involved in the early diagnosis of cancer. This doctor may be less involved in treating cancer. But it's important to keep them updated on your child's progress. This doctor may be caring for your child more closely again in the future.
- **Genetic counselor.** This is a specialist who helps find out if diseases run in families. They can order genetic testing if needed.
- **Mental health professional.** This is a specialist who helps your child and family cope with feelings that may occur due to illness. They may be a psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed counselor.
- **Nurses.** These are the healthcare providers who take care of your child at the bedside. They teach and give support to your child and family.
- **Nutritionist and dietitian.** These are providers who help with your child's nutrition. They can teach you about a special diet your child needs. They can teach you how to

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get the most out of what your child eats.

- **Palliative care doctor.** This doctor helps manage quality of life for sick people. They treat pain, side effects of treatments, and symptoms of illness.
- **Pathologist.** This is a doctor who works in a lab. They test tissue to find out the type of cancer and other diseases.
- **Pediatric oncologist.** This doctor manages your child's cancer care. They get advanced training to treat kids with cancer or blood diseases. They lead the healthcare team. They work with other team members to ensure the best care for your child.
- **Pediatric resident.** This doctor has graduated from medical school. They may be training to be a pediatrician.
- **Pediatric surgeon.** This is a doctor who does surgery on children.
- **Pharmacist.** This is a specialist trained to prepare and give out medicine.
- **Physical therapists and occupational therapists.** These are specialists who help improve strength and motor skills. They can help your child relearn daily tasks.
- **Physician assistants (PAs).** These providers work with doctors to do many things. They give exams, give medicines, and make treatment decisions.
- **Radiation oncologist.** This is a doctor who treats cancer with radiation.
- **Social worker.** This is a professional trained to help with the complex social, emotional, and money challenges that occur when a family member is ill.

## Specialists

Specialists will help care for your child. The ones you will work with will depend on the type of cancer your child has. Each of these doctors focuses on a different body part or system:

- **Cardiologist:** heart
- **Endocrinologist:** glands and hormones
- **Dermatologist:** skin
- **Gastroenterologist:** digestive system
- **Geneticist:** genetic (inherited) conditions
- **Hematologist:** blood and blood-making organs
- **Nephrologist:** kidneys
- **Neurologist:** brain and nervous system
- **Ophthalmologist:** eyes
- **Orthopedist:** bones, muscles, joints, and ligaments
- **Pulmonologist:** lungs

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- **Urologist:** urinary tract

## Support team

There are other people who can help you. They include teachers, chaplains, and many others who work at the healthcare center. Many of these experts will be part of your child's care for many years. They will work together to answer questions, provide support, and give your child the best possible care.