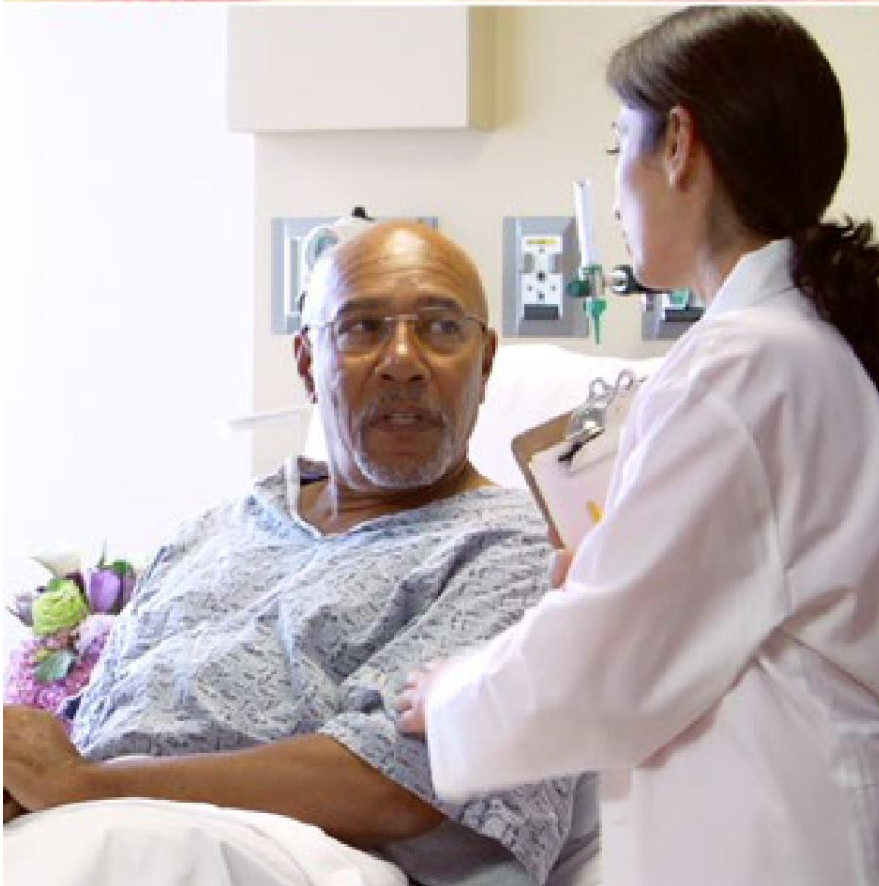
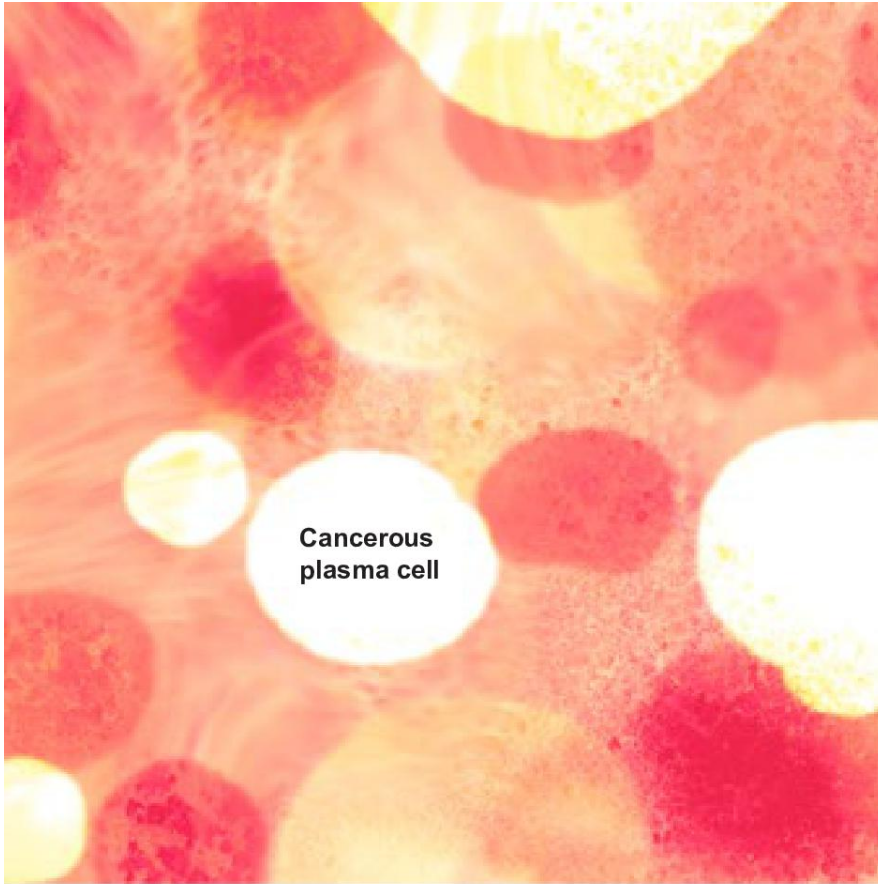




Multiple Myeloma



Overview

This type of cancer forms in blood cells called plasma cells. These are special white blood cells that help your immune system. They mainly stay inside your bone marrow, a soft, spongy tissue found in your large bones. Your bone marrow is where new blood cells are made. If you have multiple myeloma, your marrow becomes crowded with cancerous plasma cells. They crowd out healthy blood cells. They produce abnormal proteins that cause problems in your body.

Causes

Doctors aren't sure what causes multiple myeloma. Certain factors can raise your risk of the disease. It is more common in older people. It is more common in men than in women. It is more common in people who are black. It is also more common in people who have an abnormal protein in the blood.

Symptoms

Multiple myeloma can cause a wide range of symptoms. It can cause pain in your bones, especially in your spine and your chest. It can cause nausea, constipation and loss of appetite. You may experience unexpected weight loss. Multiple myeloma can result in mental fogging and fatigue. It can cause weakness or numbness in your legs. It can also make you feel excessively thirsty.

Complications

Multiple myeloma can result in serious complications. It can cause kidney problems. It can weaken your immune system, making it harder for you to fight infection. It can weaken your bones, which can lead to fractures. It can also cause anemia and other problems with your blood.

Treatment

Multiple myeloma can be treated with many cancer treatment options. These include chemotherapy, radiation therapy and stem cell transplantation. You can be treated with drugs that boost your immune system to fight the cancer cells. Your doctor can design a treatment plan that is right for your needs.