

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

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Compassionate Care -- Medical oncologist Robert Motzer and a nurse discuss treatment options with a patient with a kidney tumor.

About Kidney Cancer

Primary kidney cancer is a malignant (cancerous) tumor that starts in your kidneys. Kidney cancer is the 8th most common cancer in the United States. Nearly 75,000 people are diagnosed with this disease each year.

Most kidney tumors are found by chance after you have imaging of the abdomen (belly) for some other condition. In these cases, the tumors are often found at an early stage, before any symptoms have developed.

With other people, the cancer goes unnoticed for a long time. It is found after someone has signs of kidney cancer. Symptoms can include blood in your urine (pee) or pain in your side.

When kidney cancer is found early, most people are treated with surgery only. People then have regularly scheduled imaging tests to make sure the cancer does not come back. This is called active surveillance. As time passes, there is less of a chance the cancer will come back. You can get imaging tests less often.

Kidney cancers that are found at a later stage may already have spread past the kidneys. The word for this is metastasized, which means to spread to other parts of the body. People with cancer that has spread will need more treatment. This can include surgery, but most people have systematic therapy. This is when a medical oncologist (cancer doctor) gives you medications that spread in your body to treat cancer cells wherever they are.

Wilms' Tumor and Other Kidney Tumors in Children

This information is about kidney cancer in adults. Learn about Wilms' tumor, a kidney cancer that mostly affects children.

[Learn more](#)

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Call [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225)

Available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Eastern time)

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