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Cancer in the Unani system of medicine

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Cancer is a class of diseases characterized by out-of-control cell growth. There are over 100 different types of cancer, and each is classified by the type of cell that is initially affected. Cancer harms the body when altered cells divide uncontrollably to form lumps or masses of tissue called tumors. Tumors can grow and interfere with the digestive, nervous, and circulatory systems, and they can release hormones that alter body function.

Cancer is the uncontrolled growth of cells, which can invade and spread to distant sites of the body. Cancer can have severe health consequences, and is a leading cause of death. Lung, prostate, colorectal, stomach, and liver cancer are the most common types of cancer in men, while breast, colorectal, lung, uterine cervix, and stomach cancer are the most common among women.

In the Unani system of medicine, a number of scholars, viz., Galen (131-210 AD), Al-Razi (865-925 AD), Al-Zahrawi (939-1013 AD), Ibn Sina (980- 1037 AD) and al-Karaki (1233- 1286 AD) paid their attention towards the treatment and prevention of cancer.

The Unani philosophy is that cancer is the end stage of the degeneration of the metabolic efficiency of the body--the extinguishing of the innate heat--brought on primarily by incorrect diet and other imbalances in various aspects of the patient's life, usually occurring over a long period of time. In the Unani view, cancer is not actually one disease, but several hundred different symptoms affecting virtually any organ.

As noted above, cancer is a disease of the black bile humor. It can occur with only the black bile humor out of balance, or one or more humors out of balance along with it. In severe cases, all four humors may be disordered.

Cancer will be eliminated only when people return to a more balanced, natural lifestyle, and keep the body, mind, and spirit free from impurities.

Biography

S. Nafees Bano is currently working as a Professor at Hakim Syed Ziaul Hasan Govt. Unani Medical College, AYUSH Campus, Bhopal, India. She has done her MD from Amraze Niswan wa Qabalat. Her area of interest is AYUSH Systems of Medicine- Cancer Basics & Therapeutics.

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