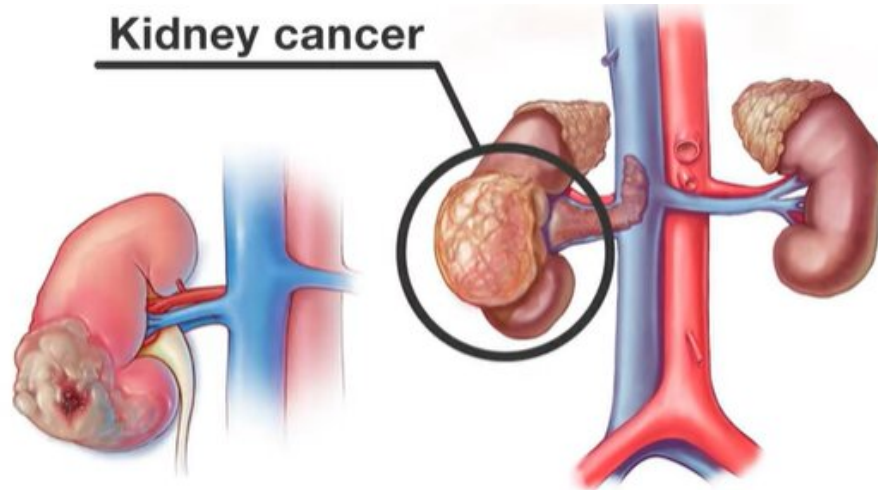


Video: How is kidney cancer treated?

March 21 2023, by Deb Balzer



Credit: Mayo Clinic News Network

More than 50,000 people in the U.S. are diagnosed with kidney cancer each year. Risks factors for developing this type of cancer include environmental exposures, such as smoking, high blood pressure, a history of kidney failure, obesity or not having a healthy weight. And there are also hereditary syndromes that may increase your risk for kidney cancer.

Dr. Thai Ho, a Mayo Clinic oncologist who specializes in genitourinary malignancies, says there are no screening tests specifically for [kidney](#)

[cancer](#). When it is discovered early, it's usually from an imaging test for another issue. So how is kidney cancer treated?

"Treating kidney cancer depends on if the cancer is localized or has metastasized. When it's localized, at Mayo Clinic, we have different opportunities to remove the [tumor](#) through surgery. We can also heat up the tumor, we can use radiation, or we can actually freeze the tumor," says Dr. Ho.

If the cancer has spread beyond the kidneys, Dr. Ho says, "We usually use the patient's own immune system to fight the cancer, which is very different from other types of tumors."

Kidney cancer is different because it does not respond to chemotherapy.

"Other therapies that we may use are basically drugs that target the [blood vessels](#) that feed the tumor. What we're trying to do is shut down the nutrients that go to the tumor, and sometimes we use these drugs together," he says.

Through treatment, Dr. Ho emphasizes quality of life.

"While on therapy, you can still have meaningful relationships with loved ones, friends and family, and you can travel, you can play sports."

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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