

Cabinet - 15 March 2025

CHILDHOOD CANCER

While the exact reasons for the rise in childhood cancer are not fully understood, several factors are suspected to contribute, including environmental exposures like air pollution, parental exposure to certain chemicals (like pesticides), diet during pregnancy and childhood, genetic factors, and improved diagnostic capabilities leading to more cases being detected, however, for most childhood cancers, the cause remains unknown.

Rises in pediatric cancers may be due to various factors, such as changes in how cancer is reported. For example, the increase in cancer rates may be due to the more prominent use of electronic pathology reporting to cancer registries.

Globally, around 400,000 children are diagnosed with cancer each year. However, the actual number is likely higher because many cases go undiagnosed.

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