

CANCER PATHWAYS
Information for patients

IS-0500E

Procedures and tests for suspected cancer in children

The child has been referred for assessment by the specialist health service because there is a suspicion of a cancer diagnosis. Specialised procedures and tests will determine whether or not it is cancer. If it is shown that the child does have cancer, the treatment will be planned in consultation with the child and his or her relatives.

The child has been referred for assessment via the Cancer pathway for cancer in children. The Cancer pathways are intended to give patients and relatives predictability and security and are national standardised pathways which are discipline-based. The aim is to speed up assessment and the start of treatment and minimise waiting times, in order to make the assessment period as predictable and stress-free as possible for you.

The Cancer pathways define the number of calendar days that each part of the assessment should take. These are called pathway timescales. Pathway timescales are targets rather than absolute requirements. For some patients, there will be medical reasons why the Cancer pathway should be longer or shorter than the timescales stated in the national Cancer pathway.

- **Procedures and tests for suspected cancer**

The aim of the assessment and the procedures and tests that the child will undergo is to determine whether or not cancer is present. The child may also be referred for assessment for a different illness. If the investigations indicate that cancer is present, information will be given about possible treatments and what will happen next. Information will also be given

on the procedures and tests concerned and when they will be carried out.

All hospitals that investigate and treat cancer patients have their own cancer pathway coordinators, who will make the necessary preparations for the Cancer pathway by booking appointments for the child's procedures and tests. You can contact the cancer pathway coordinator if you have any questions concerning practical matters relating to the assessment, appointments, etc. The cancer pathway coordinator is often a nurse, but he or she may also have a different professional background.

Medical questions will be answered by a doctor.

- **Assessment phases**

The assessment will normally be completed within 13 calendar days. For medical reasons, it may sometimes take longer. The assessment period is the period from receipt of the referral by the hospital until the assessment has been completed and it has either been confirmed that the child does not have cancer or the child has been given a diagnosis and a decision has been taken with regard to the treatment that should be given. The timescales are defined in the Cancer pathway for cancer in children.

The various phases of the assessment	Remarks	Recommended within	
<p>Phase 1: This is the period from receipt of the child's referral by the hospital until the child's first appointment of procedures and tests in the pathway</p>	<p>The cancer pathway coordinator will book the necessary appointments for the child's procedures and tests.</p>	<p>3 calendar days</p>	
<p>Phase 2: This is the period from the child's first appointment for his or her procedures and tests until the child's assessment is completed</p>	<p>During this period, the child will undergo procedures and tests in order to determine whether or not cancer is present.</p> <p>If cancer is suspected, the child will be examined by a doctor. Blood samples and X-rays will be taken, depending on the child's symptoms and the suspected illness. In some cases, other procedures and tests will be necessary and you will then be told about these.</p> <p>Once the results of the assessments are available, it will normally be possible to say whether or not the child has cancer. A decision concerning a diagnosis will then be taken. If the child does not have cancer, the Cancer pathway will be concluded.</p>	<p>10 calendar days</p>	
<p>Phase 3: This is the period from the child being diagnosed as having cancer and completing all the procedures and tests in the pathway until the start of treatment</p>	<p>If the child has cancer, the treatment that is best for the child will be determined. Any decision concerning the treatment will be taken in consultation with the family, normally based on an assessment by a multidisciplinary team.</p> <p>Depending on the diagnosis, surgical treatment, radiotherapy or medicinal treatment may be the most appropriate treatment.</p>	<p>Surgical treatment</p>	<p>14 calendar days</p>
		<p>Medicinal treatment</p>	<p>3 calendar days</p>
		<p>Radiotherapy</p>	<p>14 calendar days</p>

Treatment will normally start within 16 to 27 calendar days from the date on which the hospital receives the referral. In some cases, it may take longer for medical reasons, while in other cases, it may take place considerably quicker. The doctor will tell the family and the child what to expect and provide more information on the Cancer pathway.

For more information, visit helsenorge.no. The hospital will also have information on its website.

Notes