

Video transcript: Know your enemy – Cancer metastasis

Hi, welcome to another Museum of Human Disease “Know Your Enemy” video.

There are lots of words used to describe cancer and it can be confusing. Tumours capable of spreading into surrounding tissue are termed “malignant”. If they spread so that a new tumour is formed, either locally or further away in the body, this is termed “metastasis”.

These secondary tumours are clones of the first, or primary, tumour, so are still referred to as the original form of cancer. Here are lung cancers that metastasised to the brain, the kidney and the spine. Liver cancer that metastasised to the lung and brain. Prostate to femur and skull. Breast to skull. You can see that these are melanoma metastases to liver, brain, heart, stomach, glands and intestine.

The terrible thing here is that these are all from the same person and originated in a melanoma about this size.

The most significant causes of cancer are tobacco use, poor diet, lack of exercise, being overweight and sun exposure. These are your enemies.