

Bloom syndrome is a rare genetic disorder characterized by short stature; increased skin sensitivity to ultraviolet rays from the sun (photosensitivity); multiple small dilated blood vessels (telangiectasia) over the nose and cheeks resembling a butterfly in shape; mild immune deficiency with increased susceptibility to infections; and most importantly, a markedly increased susceptibility to many types of cancer, especially leukemia, lymphoma and gastrointestinal tract tumors. Bloom syndrome is a prototype of a group of genetic conditions known as chromosome breakage syndromes. The genetic abnormality in Bloom syndrome causes problems with DNA repair, resulting in a high number of chromosome breaks and rearrangements. The abnormal DNA repair is responsible for the increased risk for cancer.