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| Cancer Clusters  The results of Chernobyl could possibly be grouped into what is called a cancer cluster. A disease cluster is the occurrence of a greater than expected number of cases of a particular disease within a group of people, a geographic area, or a period of time. (Cancer Facts)  Facts About Cancer  1. Cancer is the uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells anywhere in the body. However, cancer is not just one disease; it is actually an umbrella term for at least 100 different but related diseases.  2. Each type of cancer has certain known and/or suspected risk factors associated with it.  3. Cancer is not caused by injuries, nor is it contagious. It cannot be passed from one person to another like a cold or the flu.  4. Cancer is almost always caused by a combination of factors that interact in ways that are not yet fully understood.  5. Carcinogenesis (the process by which normal cells are transformed into cancer cells) involves a series of changes within cells that usually occur over the course of many years. More than 10 years can go by between the beginning of carcinogenesis and the diagnosis of cancer. The long period of time between the first cellular abnormality and the clinical recognition that cancer is present often makes it difficult to pinpoint the cause of the cancer.  6. Cancer is more likely to occur as people get older; because people are living longer, more cases of cancer can be expected in the future. This may create the impression that cancer is becoming much more common, when an increase in the number of cases of cancer is partly related to the aging of the population.  Almost 15 million new cases of cancer have been diagnosed since 1990. Therefore, it is not unusual for several cases of cancer to occur by chance or coincidence within the same family or neighborhood.  Facts About Cancer Clusters  A suspected cancer cluster is more likely to be a true cluster, rather than a coincidence, if it involves:  A large number of cases of a specific type of cancer, rather than several different types;  A rare type of cancer, rather than common types; or  An increased number of cases of a certain type of cancer in an age group that is not usually affected by that type of cancer. (Cancer Facts)    ([Project Discovery](http://docs.google.com/introduction.html))([California Law](http://docs.google.com/intro2.html))([Physiological Link](http://docs.google.com/intro3.html))([Cancer Clusters](http://docs.google.com/intro4.html))([Environmental Disasters](http://docs.google.com/intro5.html))  [[Home](http://docs.google.com/home.html)][[Introduction](http://docs.google.com/introduction.html)][[Hypothesis](http://docs.google.com/hypothesis.html)][[Procedure](http://docs.google.com/procedure.html)][[Data](http://docs.google.com/data.html)][[Conclusions](http://docs.google.com/conclusions.html)][[Biblio/Links](http://docs.google.com/biblio.html)]  [[2002 Projects](http://docs.google.com/AP2002/index.html)][[2001 Projects](http://docs.google.com/index.html)][[2000 Projects](http://docs.google.com/AP2000/index.html)][[1999 Projects](http://docs.google.com/AP99/index.html)][[1998 Projects](http://docs.google.com/AP98/index.html)] |