What can dogs tell us about cancer?

Printed from https://www.cancerquest.org/newsroom/2017/02/what-can-dogs-tell-us-about-cancer on 11/14/2026



We can learn a lot from our canine pals.

Comparative oncology is the study of naturally occurring cancers in pets and humans in order to better understand the disease and potential treatment options. In fact, cancer is the number one killer of pets older than ten years.

Dogs are physiologically and genetically very similar to us. In fact, scientists have mapped out the entire canine genome! Dogs are 87 percent genetically similar to us. The biology of bone cancer, lymphoma, and bladder cancer are almost identical in humans and dogs. How is that? The genetic mutations that cause cancer to develop are the same in both species. This means that treatments that work for dogs should be useful for humans too.

For example, for a type of bone cancer (osteosarcoma), the intensive research done in dogs has lead to major strides in discovering treatments for children. Surgical techniques and reconstruction after surgery used for dogs are now being used for children too.

Recently, immunotherapy has been used to slow down or prevent the spread of bone cancer in dogs. Because of this, the FDA has fast tracked this treatment to be used for humans too.

Source
http://www.cnn.com/2017/02/03/health/dogs-cancer-partner/index.html
Learn More
For more information, check out this link!