



To whom it may concern,

We hope you are able to accept our enclosed information cards, "Signs and symptoms of Childhood cancer, think LADYBIRDS." The aim of this card is to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms that children with cancer may present with. They are evidence based and written by doctors.

The cards are designed to be easy to read and remember, and to help make parents, carers and teachers aware of the signs and symptoms because **early diagnosis saves lives**. If they are able to be sent home from school, clubs and care settings we would be very grateful. We suggest that they should be given out in envelopes or similar or given to parents rather than giving the card directly to children to read.

A little about the Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust

The Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust was set up in memory of Grace Elizabeth Kelly from Worcester who passed away in November 2014 at the age of 4 from a rare form of cancer. In her memory, we are working to raise awareness of childhood cancer and the signs and symptoms children and young people may have at presentation.

Isn't childhood cancer rare though?

Although thankfully not common, cancer in children and young people occurs more than we think. Childhood cancer is the number one non-accidental cause of death of children in the UK. Current statistics show that 1 in every 500 children get cancer before their 14th birthday. Reading this card and pinning it to the top a parent's fridge really may save a child's life.

Please remember, most children who develop these symptoms however do not have cancer. It is more likely that they are caused by a normal childhood complaint, but please ensure they are reviewed by a doctor if you are concerned. On the back of this letter is a summary of further information should anyone be concerned on reading the symptom cards. There is also more information on what to do on our website.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jennifer Kelly and the trustees at the
Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust

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Remember to think **LADYBIRDS**

- Loss of weight, sickness, nausea** Children that appear to have lost weight (and not rapidly regained it after a viral illness), need reviewing. Persistent (more than a few days) sickness, feeling sick or constant feelings of fullness are an indication that a child may need review.
- Appearance** If a child has an unhealthy pale appearance (pallor) or an unusually swollen tummy, or constipation that is not improving.
- Discomfort** Children with pain that is not resolving (for several days or up to 2 weeks) or keeps returning need to a doctor, especially if they have a limp or simple painkillers do not help. Pain should normally not wake a child up from sleep.
- You are concerned** As a parent or carer, **you** are the advocate of the child. **If you are concerned, please take them to see a doctor. If you remain concerned please seek medical advice again and keep trying.**
- Blood in urine, bleeding, bruising** If a child has widespread or excess bruising with no history of trauma or seems to be bleeding unusually e.g. excessive nosebleeds they need review. Blood in urine can appear as bright red or brown (cola coloured).
- Irritability or exhaustion** If a child constantly appears exhausted (out of proportion with their level of activity) or appears to have changed in personality, becoming more anxious, or angry, it is something to keep in mind.
- Recurrent viral illnesses** All children get coughs, colds and temperatures. Often, they may be run down with one cold and then end up catching another. This is completely normal, so when do you worry? If a child seems to have constant back to back viral illnesses without a break, night sweats or seems to be hit harder by illnesses than their peers, it is a good idea to get them checked. In addition, if they appear to suddenly develop persistent or recurrent high temperatures with no obvious accompanying illnesses, they need review.
- Disturbance in vision** Severe or worsening headaches, especially if worse on waking in the morning or if accompanied by vomiting, double vision or a new onset of a squint.
Beware of babies or young children who have an usual white appearance of one or both of their eyes in low light this needs urgent review.
- Swelling or lump** Enlarged lymph nodes are common in children after viral illnesses, but they would usually be expected to resolve within a week or two. Any lumps or bumps that do not resolve within a few days need reviewing. They may be in their tummy, skin, muscle or bone.

If your child, or a child you know is suffering from any of the symptoms described, or other symptoms you are concerned about, the best thing to do is make sure you see your doctor. It is most likely to be a normal childhood problem, but in the unlikely chance it is cancer, **early diagnosis can save lives.**