WHAT IS CANCER?

Cancer is a disease where normal cells grow in an uncontrolled way. This growth causes a lump called tumour. If not treated, the tumour can cause problems in the following ways

1. Nearby normal cells are affected
2. Causing pressure on other body structures
3. Spreading through lymphatic system or bloodstream to other parts of the body

BURDEN OF CANCER

Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide, accounting for 14 million new cases and 8.2 million deaths in 2012. The most common causes of cancer death are cancers of:

- Lung (1.59 million deaths)
- Liver (745 000 deaths)
- Stomach (723 000 deaths)
- Colorectal (694 000 deaths)
- Breast (521 000 deaths)
- Oesophageal cancer (400 000 deaths)

The rate of mortality due to cancer in India was high and alarming with about 806000 existing cases by the end of the last century. Cancer is the second most common disease in India responsible for maximum mortality with about 0.3 million deaths per year.