

# Comprehensive, Family-Centered Care for Children with Cancer

The Hematology & Oncology Clinic at Children's Hospital & Medical Center

Each year, approximately 10,000 children are diagnosed with cancer. Most of them will need surgery as part of their treatment, but only a handful of physicians in the entire country have subspecialty training in both pediatric surgery and surgical oncology. Fortunately for Nebraskans, one such highly skilled surgeon is close to home at Children's Hospital & Medical Center.

"When an adult must undergo surgical treatment for cancer, it is well understood that a surgical oncologist can provide the best care," notes board-certified pediatric surgeon and surgical oncologist Shahab Abdessalam, M.D. "The same is true for children. When surgery for a child's cancer is approached with the dual perspective of both pediatric expertise and advanced oncology training, we can vastly improve outcomes and give each child the best results possible."

Acore member of Children's multidisciplinary pediatric oncology team, Dr. Abdessalam and his colleagues work collaboratively to provide sophisticated diagnostics, unparalleled treatment and comprehensive family care for a broad range of childhood cancers.

"Childhood cancer is a family diagnosis," says Dr. Abdessalam. "It's a disease that significantly impacts not only the child, but



Children's Hospital & Medical Center in Omaha

the parents and siblings as well. That's why Children's is designed around the needs of families, from private patient rooms and personal patient web pages to the Family Resource Center and the Rainbow House, a home away from home that provides Children's families with a comfortable place to stay. We include the whole family because each family member needs, and deserves, our attention."

## Bringing Compassion & Clinical Excellence Together

The only pediatric hospital in the region to provide comprehensive pediatric oncology care in one single, convenient location, Children's is home to some of the most sophisticated treatments and technologies currently available, including minimally-invasive surgery, which can speed recovery with fewer scars, and sentinel node mapping, which can provide early detection of metastasis.

What's more, Children's is a member of Children's Oncology Group, which is the largest cooperative cancer research organization in the world solely dedicated to the clinical study of pediatric cancers.

"Because we have access to leading-edge clinical trials, our patients often have the opportunity to take advantage of new medications and treatments that would be otherwise unavailable," explains Dr. Abdessalam. "In addition to receiving the newest treatments first, patients who participate in clinical trials are also active participants in the search for a cure."

## Advancing Care for Childhood Cancers

Beyond breaking new ground in pediatric oncology care, Children's is also raising the level of outpatient care for children with cancer through its new Specialty Pediatric Center, which will be completed in 2010. "The new Center will provide a welcoming



Shahab Abdessalam, M.D. and patients

and child-friendly atmosphere with an infusion center and expanded clinic space that's dedicated specifically to oncology," Dr. Abdessalam says. "What's most exciting for patients is that they'll be able to get the care they need without even stepping foot in the hospital — and getting children out of the hospital and back to normal is our highest priority."

*The only full-service pediatric specialty health care center in Nebraska, Children's Hospital & Medical Center has provided unparalleled care for children and their families since 1948. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, please call 1-800-833-3100.*



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