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Carcinogen

National Cancer Institute

Source

National Cancer Institute. *Carcinogen*. NCI Thesaurus. Code C347.

Any chemical, biological or physical agents that increase the risk of neoplasms in humans or animals. Carcinogens include natural or synthesized compounds, certain viruses, and various sources of radiation. A carcinogen may directly alter the genetic material of cells (genotoxic), thereby initiating or promoting the process of malignant transformation; it also may induce cancers by mechanisms that do not involve a direct alteration of cellular genetic material (non-genotoxic). (NCI04)