

Stomach Cancer Information



About this document

This document has information about **stomach cancer**.

Pancare wrote this document.



Pancare is a charity.

It helps people with stomach, pancreas and liver cancers.



In this document, you can read about:

- Signs of stomach cancer
- How stomach cancer happens
- How doctors find out someone has stomach cancer

In this document, you can also read about:

- What can be done about stomach cancer when someone has it
- What it's like to live with stomach cancer



What is the stomach?

- The stomach is an empty bag in your belly
- It helps digest food



What is stomach cancer?

- Stomach cancer happens when cells grow too much in the stomach
- Another name for stomach cancer is **gastric cancer**
- There are different types of stomach cancer



What are the signs of stomach cancer?

At the beginning, stomach cancer may not have any signs.



Later, there may be signs like:

- Difficulty swallowing
- Feeling full quickly
- Burning feeling in the chest or throat
- Bloating or pain in your belly
- Losing weight for no reason
- Feeling tired for no reason
- Blood in your poo or vomit
- Feeling sick or vomiting



How does stomach cancer happen?

Sometimes doctors don't know why cancer happens. It can build up slowly.



How do doctors find out someone has stomach cancer?

To find out if someone has stomach cancer, doctors may:

- Check your body for changes
- Do blood tests

Doctors may also have different tests for you:

- **Endoscopy**

This is when a camera goes down your throat to look in your stomach

- **Biopsy**

This is when doctors take a sample from your body and test it in a lab

- **CT scan**

This is when a computer takes pictures of the inside of your body

- **PET scan**

PET scan uses dye to show how your organs are working

- **MRI scan**

MRI scan uses magnetic radio waves to take a clear picture of your body

- **Laparoscopy**

This small operation uses a camera to look inside the body to check if the cancer has spread



What is staging?

Staging means finding out how far cancer has spread.

This helps doctors choose the best treatment.

Stage 1 – cancer is only in the stomach lining

Stage 2 and 3 – cancer has spread deeper into the stomach

Stage 4 – cancer has spread to other parts of the body



What can be done about stomach cancer?

What can be done depends on your health.

Ask your doctor about **clinical trials**.

Your doctor may recommend:

- **Surgery**

There are different types of surgeries for stomach cancer.

Doctors can take out small cancers or take out the whole stomach.

- **Radiotherapy**

Radiotherapy uses X-rays to kill cancer

- **Chemotherapy**

Chemotherapy uses drugs to kill or slow cancer

- **Immunotherapy**

Immunotherapy helps your body fight cancer

- **Targeted therapy**

Targeted therapy uses drugs on certain cancer cells



What is it like to live with stomach cancer?

It's okay to feel worried. These tips may help:

- Ask questions about your care
- Talk to your doctor about dealing with pain
- Talk to a dietitian if you have trouble eating
- Try gentle exercise to feel better
- Talk to a friend or listen to soft music
- Ask for help from family, friends or support groups
- Talk to your boss or Centrelink
- Ask about financial support