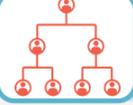


Causes and risks of stomach cancer

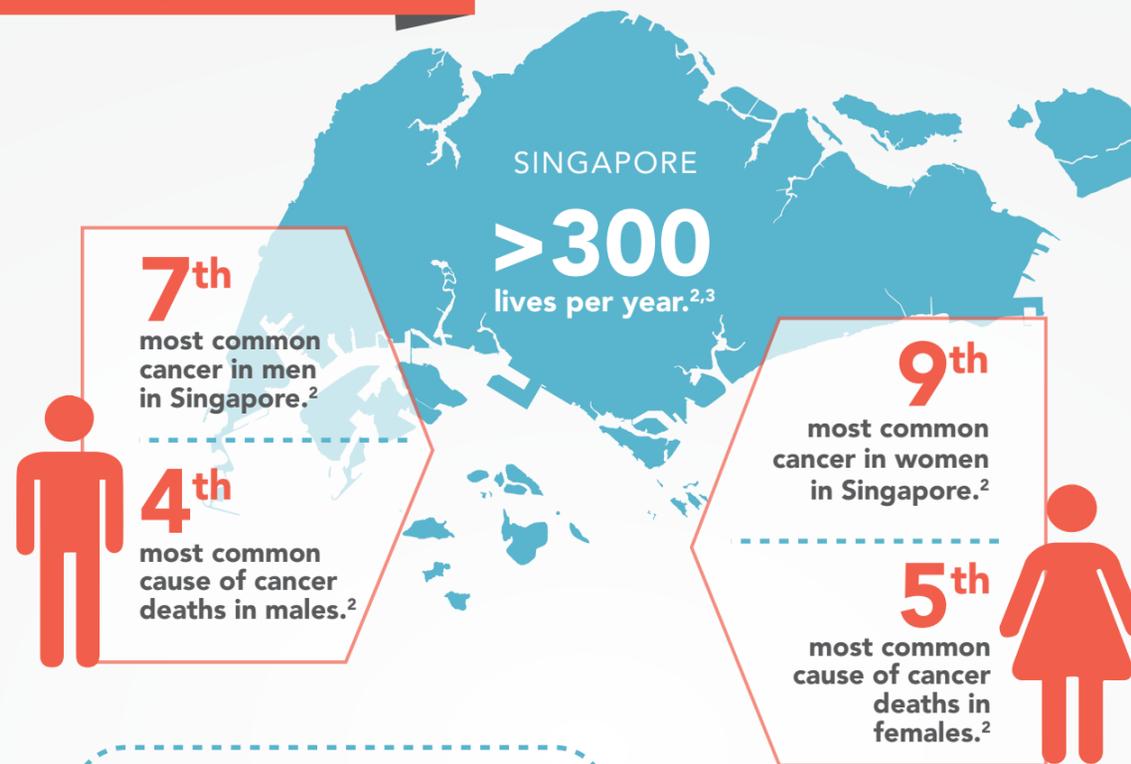
Lifestyle factors are linked to 3 out of 4 stomach cancers. We don't know what causes most stomach cancers, but there are some factors that may increase your risk of developing it. Having any of these risk factors does not mean that you will definitely develop cancer.

	Diet Eating too few fruits and vegetables.	Salt High salt content in food is linked to causing 1 in 4 stomach cancers. Your risk of stomach cancer also increases if you eat lots of pickled vegetables.	Meat A diet that is high in processed meat like ham, bacon and sausages.
	Smoking Smoking increases your risk of getting stomach cancer and the risk increases with the number of cigarettes smoked per day.		
	Chronic Helicobacter pylori infection Chronic infection with Helicobacter pylori, a bacterium that lives in the mucous lining of the stomach. Infection with H.pylori causes around 1 in 3 stomach cancers. H. pylori is a bacteria that live in the mucous of the lining of the stomach. For most people, having a H. pylori infection will not cause any problem. But in some cases long term infection can cause inflammation and stomach ulcers. There is also some evidence that diet and smoking may interact with H. pylori to increase the risk of stomach cancer. Blood, stool and breath tests can detect Helicobacter infection. The treatment is a course of antibiotics with a medicine to reduce the amount of acid in your stomach.		
	Family History 2 to 10 times higher if you have a family history of the disease.		
	Chronic Gastritis Those with a history of chronic gastritis, which refers to a long-term inflammation of the stomach.		

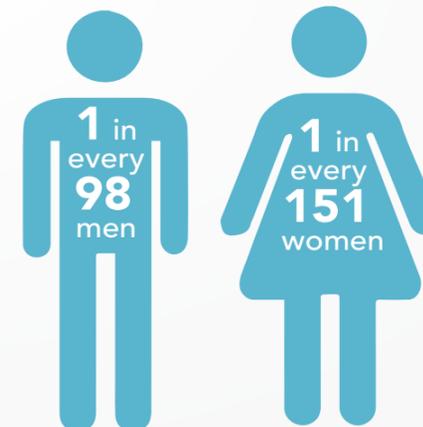
Other common factors that may affect your risk

	Being overweight or obese There is some research linking being overweight or obese to stomach cancer; however the evidence isn't certain. Overweight = a body mass index (BMI) of 25 to 30. Obese = BMI of 30 or higher. BMI = weight (kg) / height (m ²)
	Age and sex • More common in people aged 75 or over. • Twice as likely in men vs. women.
	Alcohol There is some link between moderate and heavy drinking to risk of getting stomach cancer. Those with a history of chronic gastritis, which refers to a long-term inflammation of stomach.
	Low amounts of stomach acid
	Reduced immunity Reduced immunity means that you are prone to picking up infections with Helicobacter pylori. Your immunity may be reduced from some medical conditions and treatments that are suppressing it.

How Common is It?^{2,3}



Risk of developing stomach cancer is higher for people above **age 75²**:
1 in every 4 to 5 Singapore residents, male or female, is likely to develop cancer in his or her lifetime.



References :1. <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/stomach-cancer> assessed on 3 November 2016. 2. Singapore Cancer Registry Report (2010-2014) released by National Registry of Diseases Office (NRDO, 2015) 3. Singapore Cancer Society <http://www.singaporecancersociety.org.sg/learn-about-cancer/types-of-cancer/stomach-cancer.htm> assessed on 22 Nov 2016.

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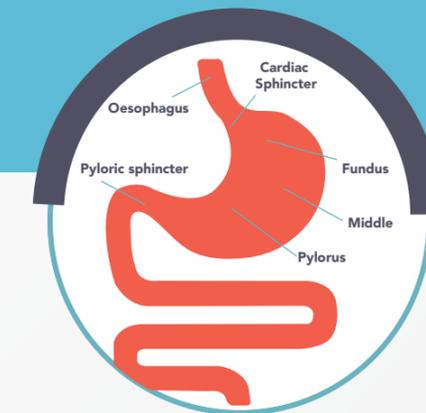
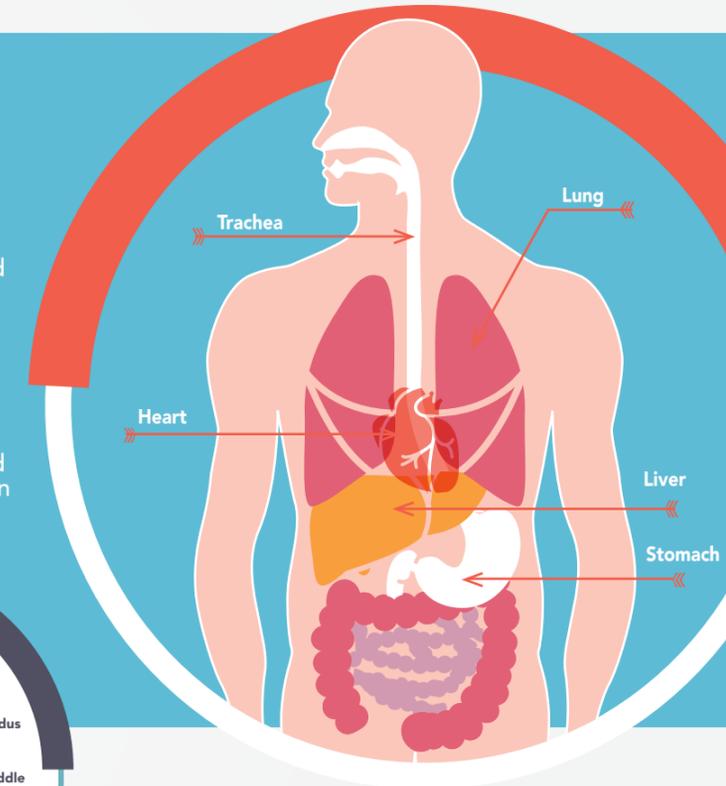
Stomach Cancer

The Stomach

The stomach is part of the digestive system. It lies just under the lungs. The top of the stomach is joined to the bottom of the oesophagus (food pipe) and the other end is attached to the bowel.¹

The gastroesophageal junction

The top of the stomach is joined to the bottom of the oesophagus (food pipe). The gastroesophageal junction is where the oesophagus joins the stomach.¹



STOMACH CANCER is cancer that starts anywhere inside the stomach or the stomach wall. It's also called gastric cancer.¹

Lilly

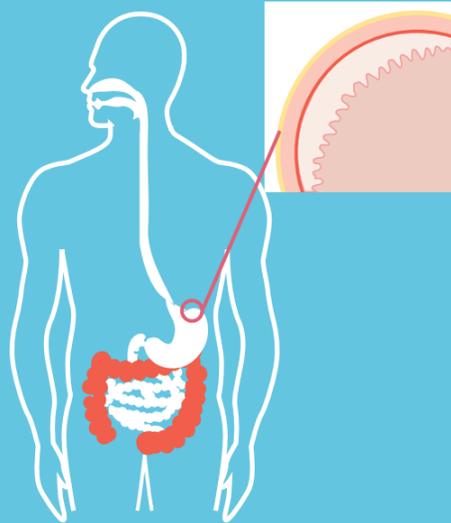
Lilly

Who gets it¹

Stomach cancer is more common in men than women. More than 5 out of 10 cases (50%) occur in people aged 75 or over.

Many stomach cancers are linked to lifestyle or environmental factors, including diet. Stomach cancer is linked with a bacteria that lives in the stomach called *Helicobacter pylori* but not everyone with *Helicobacter pylori* infection will develop stomach cancer.

Where it starts¹



Stomach cancer can start in any part of the stomach or the stomach wall. The treatment will depend on where the stomach starts.

Most stomach cancers start in the gland cells in the inner stomach lining. These are called adenocarcinomas. Some cancers can also start in the immune system cells. This is called non Hodgkins lymphoma.

Stomach cancer can also start in the hormone cells in the stomach. These are called neuroendocrine cancers. The treatment you need if you have one of these types of cancer is different to adenocarcinomas.

The doctor will make a diagnosis and determine what is a suitable treatment based on where the cancer starts, what stage of the cancer the patient currently having as well as his fitness to receive the treatment.

9 Signs and Symptoms of Stomach Cancer¹



Difficulty Swallowing (Dysphagia)

You may feel pain or a burning sensation when you swallow, or it may feel like you have food stuck in your throat or chest. This is the most common symptom of oesophageal cancer. A harmless narrowing of the oesophagus called a stricture can also make it difficult for you to swallow. It is important to get this symptom checked by your doctor.

Dark Stools (Blood In Your Stool)

Your stools may be darker – almost black – if your stomach is bleeding. Your stools can also be darker if you're taking iron tablets.

Feeling Tired and Breathless

This can be because you have a reduced number of red blood cells (anaemia).

Weight Loss without Trying

Rarely, extreme weight loss can be a sign of an advanced cancer.

Pain In Your Tummy Or Behind Your Breast Bone (Sternum)

Your Breast Bone (Sternum)

Persistent Indigestion (Dyspepsia) and Burping

You can get indigestion when acid from the stomach goes back up (reflux) into the food pipe (oesophagus) or you can get it if you have any irritation in your stomach. This often happens after eating (heartburn). Remember, indigestion is common and it's not usually caused by cancer. Indigestion and heartburn can be very painful, even if nothing is seriously wrong. See your doctor if you've had heartburn most days for 3 weeks or more, even if you're taking medicine and it seems to help.

Feeling Full After Eating Small Amounts

This is often an early symptom and can cause weight loss.

Sickness (Vomiting)

A small blockage may happen in the stomach that stops food from passing through and make you vomit. Rarely, there is blood in the vomit. You may not be able to see any blood if it is in small amounts. The blood might be bright red, which means it is fresh bleeding or it may look dark brown, like used coffee grounds, if the blood has been in the stomach for a while.

Symptoms of early stomach cancer can be the same as symptoms of other conditions, such as ulcers.

Bleeding

Early and advanced stomach cancer can cause bleeding in the stomach. Over time this reduces the number of red blood cells in your blood (anaemia).

WHEN TO SEE YOUR DOCTOR

You should see your doctor if you have:

1 Difficulty swallowing

2 Symptoms that are unusual for you

3 Symptoms that don't go away



Your symptoms are unlikely to be cancer BUT it is important to get them checked by a doctor.

Very often no symptoms appear until the cancer is in the advanced stage. If the cancer is detected early, it is potentially curable. However, more than two-thirds of stomach cancer patients are diagnosed at Stage III or IV.²

