

[Home](#) > [Types of Cancer](#) > [Gestational Trophoblastic Disease](#) > Gestational Trophoblastic Disease - Risk Factors

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## **Gestational Trophoblastic Disease - Risk Factors [1]**

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board \[2\]](#), 07/2014

**ON THIS PAGE:** You will find out more about the factors that increase the chance of developing this type of tumor. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

A risk factor is anything that increases a person's chance of developing disease. Although risk factors often influence the development of a tumor, most do not directly cause it. Some people with several risk factors never develop a tumor, while others with no known risk factors do. However, knowing your risk factors and talking about them with your doctor may help you make more informed lifestyle and health care choices.

The following factors may raise a woman's risk of developing GTD:

**Age.** Being younger than 20 or older than 35 when becoming pregnant brings a higher risk of GTD. The risk increases when the woman is over age 45 at the time of pregnancy.

**Previous HM.** A previous molar pregnancy may increase the risk of developing another GTD.

**Nutrition/diet.** Some studies have linked low levels of carotene and vitamin A in a person's diet with a higher risk of molar pregnancy.

**Blood type.** Specific blood types – blood type A or AB – may slightly increase the risk of GTD.

**Birth control pills.** Women who take birth control pills may have a higher risk of GTD once they do become pregnant, particularly for those who took the pill for a long time.

**Family history of HM.** There have been rare cases of women in the same family having one or

more molar pregnancies.

The only known way to avoid GTD is to avoid pregnancy. However, in making such family planning decisions, women should remember that GTD overall is rare. Women who've had an HM in the past, or are worried about GTD for any reason, are encouraged to talk with their doctors about the future risk of GTD.

*To continue reading this guide, use the menu on the side of your screen to select another section.*

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### **Links**

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/gestational-trophoblastic-disease/risk-factors>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>