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[Small Bowel Cancer - Risk Factors](#) [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 08/2015

ON THIS PAGE: You will find out more about the factors that increase the chance of developing this type of cancer. 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 cancer. Although risk factors often influence the development of cancer, most do not directly cause cancer. Some people with several risk factors never develop cancer, while others with no known risk factors do. However, knowing your risk factors and talking about them with your doctor can help you make more informed lifestyle and health care choices.

The following factors may raise a person's risk of small bowel cancer:

- **Diet.** Eating high-fat foods may raise the risk of small bowel cancer. Regularly consuming smoked or cured foods may also increase a person's risk.
- **Crohn's disease.** Crohn's disease is a chronic inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract. People with Crohn's disease have a higher risk of [colorectal](#) [3] and small bowel cancers.
- **Celiac disease.** Celiac disease is a digestive disease that interferes with the absorption of nutrients from food in the small bowel. The body's immune system responds to a protein called gluten—which is found in wheat, rye, barley, and oats—and can damage the lining of the small bowel.

- **Familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP).** FAP is an inherited condition characterized by hundreds or thousands of colon polyps, which are small growths. The polyps are usually benign (noncancerous), but there is nearly a 100% chance that the polyps will develop into cancer if left untreated. Individuals with FAP are also at risk for other types of cancer, including stomach cancer, duodenal cancer, thyroid cancer, pancreatic cancer, and hepatoblastoma, which is liver cancer seen mainly in early childhood. Learn more about [FAP](#) [4].

The [next section in this guide is Symptoms and Signs](#) [5] and it explains what body changes or medical problems this disease can cause. Or, use the menu on the side of your screen to choose another section to continue reading this guide.

Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/small-bowel-cancer/risk-factors>

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

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/31317>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18852>

[5] <http://www.cancer.net/node/19635>