

Oncologist-approved cancer information from the American Society of Clinical Oncology

Home > Cancer Types

Printed December 11, 2013 from http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/stomach-cancer

Stomach Cancer

This section has been reviewed and approved by the Cancer. Net Editorial Board [1], May / 2013

Overview

ON THIS PAGE: You will find some basic information about this disease and the parts of the body it may affect. This is the first page of Cancer.Net?s Guide to Stomach Cancer. To see other pages, use the colored boxes on the right side of your screen. Think of those boxes as a roadmap to this full guide. Or, click ?Next? at the bottom of each page.

About the stomach

The stomach is located in the upper abdomen and plays a central role in digesting food. When food is swallowed, it is pushed down the esophagus (the muscular tube that connects the throat with the stomach) and enters the stomach. The muscles in the stomach mix the food and release gastric juices that help break down and digest the food. The food then moves into the small intestine for further digestion.

Types of stomach cancer

Stomach cancer, also called gastric cancer, begins when cells in the stomach become abnormal and grow uncontrollably. These cells form a growth of tissue, called a tumor. A tumor can be benign (noncancerous) or malignant (cancerous, meaning it can spread to other parts of the body). Cancer can begin in any part of the stomach, and it can spread to nearby lymph nodes and other areas of the body, such as the liver, bones, lungs, and a woman?s ovaries.

Most stomach cancers are a type called adenocarcinoma, which means that the cancer started in the glandular tissue that lines the inside of the stomach. Other types of cancerous tumors that form in the stomach include lymphoma [2], gastric sarcoma [3], and carcinoid tumors [4], but these are rare.

Looking for More of an Overview?

If you would like additional introductory information, explore these related items. Please note these links take you to other sections on Cancer.Net:

- ASCO Answers Fact Sheet [5]: Read a one-page fact sheet (available in PDF) that offers an easy-to-print introduction to this type of cancer.
- Cancer.Net En Español [6]: Read about stomach cancer in Spanish. Infórmase sobresáncer de estómago en español [6].

Or, choose ?Next? (below, right) to continue reading this detailed section. To select a specific topic within this section, use the colored boxes located on the right side of your screen.

- [1] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
- [2] http://www.cancer.net/node/19207 [3] http://www.cancer.net/node/19604
- [4] http://www.cancer.net/node/18645
- [5] http://www.cancer.net/sites/cancer.net/files/asco_answers_stomach.pdf
- [6] http://www.cancer.net/node/18065