

Gastric (stomach) cancer occurs in less than 1% (0.8%) of people in their lifetimes. Known environmental and genetic risk factors for gastric cancer include:

Demographics

- Age: the risk for gastric cancer (and most other cancers) increases as we get older.
- Gender: gastric cancer occurs more frequently in men than in women.

Lifestyle/Environmental Factors

- Diet: eating a diet rich in salted and smoked foods, and deficient in fruits and vegetables, can increase the risk for gastric cancer.
- Cigarette smoking: smoking has been implicated as a risk factor for multiple different cancers, including gastric cancer.
- Occupation: people who work in the rubber and coal industries appear to be at elevated risk for gastric cancer.

Personal Medical History

- Infection with *H. pylori*
- Gastric polyps
- Chronic inflammation of the stomach (gastritis)
- Pernicious anemia
- Intestinal metaplasia

Family History

- Family history of gastric cancer: how high the risk is depends on how many relatives have been diagnosed, how closely you are related to the family members who have been diagnosed, and how old those relatives were when they were diagnosed.
- Hereditary cancer syndromes: approximately 3-5% of gastric cancers are due to inherited genetic mutations which increase the risk for gastric cancer. Several different genes and genetic syndromes are known to be associated with increased risk for gastric cancer. The links below provide more information about hereditary gastric cancer genes.

Genes related to an increased risk for gastric cancer (click on them for more information):

- [Familial Adenomatous Polyposis \(APC\)](#)

- [Hereditary Diffuse Gastric Cancer \(CDH1\)](#)
- [Juvenile Polyposis syndrome \(BMPR1A, SMAD4\)](#)
- [Lynch syndrome \(MLH1, MSH2, PMS2, MSH6, and EPCAM\)](#)
- [Peutz-Jeghers syndrome \(STK11\)](#)

Click [here](#) to learn more about scheduling a genetic counseling appointment for questions about hereditary cancer predisposition.

Additional Resources

*[Positive Results Facebook Group](#)

Genetic Support Foundation hosts a Facebook group for Hereditary Cancer Support and Resources. Get trusted information and join a community of support.

*[Cascade Screening Connector](#)

Genetic Support Foundation has partnered with the Washington State Department of Health to provide cascade screening to help people identify and contact family members who may have an increased chance of developing cancer.

*[FORCE \(Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered\)](#)

The FORCE mission is to improve the lives of individuals and families facing hereditary cancer. Resources include peer navigation and expert-reviewed information.

*[AliveAndKickn](#) AliveAndKickn is a nonprofit working to improve the lives of individuals and families affected by Lynch Syndrome and associated cancers through research, education, and screening.

*[Health Experiences USA](#) This national research project brings patient voices into the healthcare experience and features video clips of people facing hereditary cancer.

Individuals from a variety of backgrounds share both positive and negative experiences about living with hereditary cancer.