



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.