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Facts About Stomach (Gastric) Cancer

Facts and Figures

- Stomach cancer is the uncontrolled growth of cancerous cells that originate in stomach tissue.
- The American Cancer Society estimates 21,000 Americans will be diagnosed and more than 10,500 will die from the disease in 2010.¹
- Currently, there are more than 64,000 people living with stomach cancer in the United States.²

Types of Stomach Cancer

- The most common type of stomach cancer, called adenocarcinoma, originates in the innermost lining of the stomach and accounts for more than 90 percent of tumors.³
- Adenocarcinoma of the stomach or the area where the stomach and esophagus join (gastroesophageal junction) is further divided into two categories, based on the genetic makeup of the tumor: human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2)-positive and HER2-negative (sometimes referred to as “HER2-normal”).
- In advanced (metastatic) stomach cancer, the cancer has moved beyond the wall of the stomach and into nearby organs. This makes the cancer harder to treat and results in a poorer prognosis.³
- According to one large study, 22 percent of adenocarcinoma stomach cancers are HER2-positive.⁴
- People diagnosed with stomach cancer can have their tumor tested to determine its HER2 status.⁴
 - There are distinct differences in HER2 testing for gastric and breast cancers that may impact a HER2-positive or HER2-negative diagnosis.

Risk Factors and Symptoms

• Risk Factors

- *Gender and Age* – men are more likely to develop stomach cancer, and incidence increases significantly after age 50.³
- *Ethnicity and Family History* – Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and African-Americans are at higher risk.³
- *Geography* – the disease is most common in east Asia, southeast Europe and Latin America.³
- *Medical Conditions* – certain stomach conditions increase risk, including some types of polyps, the inability to absorb vitamin B12 and bacterial infections caused by an organism often associated with ulcers (*Helicobacter pylori*).³
- *Smoking* – tobacco use can double the risk of stomach cancer.³

- *Diet* – eating high amounts of salted meat and fish, smoked foods and pickled vegetables can increase risk.³
- **Symptoms** – People who have stomach cancer rarely show symptoms in the early stages. Typical symptoms in later stages include indigestion, feeling full, weight loss, abdominal swelling and pain, lack of appetite, nausea and vomiting.³

Prognosis and Survival

- About 28 percent of people in the United States with stomach cancer will live five years or longer.³ Many people have no symptoms until the disease has advanced into late stages when the tumor cannot be surgically removed or has spread to other parts of the body.³
- Approximately two-thirds of people diagnosed with stomach cancer have locally advanced (Stage III) or metastatic (Stage IV) disease.²

Stage	Description	5-Year Survival Rate ³
IA	Tumor is limited to the inner layer of the stomach	71 percent
IB		57 percent
IIA	Tumor has spread to the main muscle layer of the stomach	45 percent
IIB		33 percent
IIIA	Tumor has spread to the outer layers of the stomach, to nearby lymph nodes and into nearby organs	20 percent
IIIB		14 percent
IIIC		9 percent
IV	Tumor has spread to organs and lymph nodes distant from the stomach	4 percent

Treatment

- Treatment of stomach cancer depends on several factors, including the location and size of the tumor, the stage of disease and the person's age and overall health.³
- In the past 15 years, only one treatment (a chemotherapy) has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to help people with advanced stomach cancer live longer.⁵
- Current treatment options also include surgery and radiation.³
- Additional treatments are being studied.

References

- ¹ American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts & Figures 2010. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2010.
- ² National Cancer Institute. Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results Stomach Cancer Fact Sheet. <http://seer.cancer.gov/stafacts/html/stomach.html>. Accessed March 15, 2010.
- ³ American Cancer Society. Stomach Cancer Detailed Guide. <http://www.cancer.org>. Accessed March 15, 2010.
- ⁴ Bang Y, et al. Pathological features of advanced gastric cancer (GC): Relationship to human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2) positivity in the global screening programme of the ToGA trial. *J Clin Oncol*, 2009 ASCO Meeting Proceedings; 27:15s (suppl; abstr 4556).
- ⁵ Moiseyenko VM, et al. Randomized controlled phase III trial (TAX 325) comparing docetaxel (T) combined with cisplatin (C) and 5-fluorouracil (F) to CF in patients with metastatic gastric adenocarcinoma (MGC). *J Clin Oncol*, 2005 ASCO Meeting Proceedings; 23:16s (suppl; abstr 4002).