

lighted tube to inspect your stomach. The endoscope can also perform a biopsy, removing a small piece of tissue to examine under a microscope for cancer cells.

Your doctor may order blood tests, chest x-rays, a CT scan, an endoscopic ultrasound, or MRI to further assess how much the cancer has spread.

### What is the treatment for stomach cancer?

There are many types of treatment options for stomach cancer:

Surgery is one option and the type of surgery that takes place depends on the location of the tumour. Your doctor may remove the whole stomach or only the cancerous part. In the event that the entire stomach is removed, the oesophagus is directly connected to the small intestine.

Chemotherapy is the most common form of treatment for stomach cancer, where anti-cancer drugs are used to eliminate cancer cells. The drugs are usually given through a vein. Radiation therapy, which uses high-energy radiation rays to destroy cancer cells, is usually combined with chemotherapy to treat this type of cancer.

Biological therapy is another option, where certain substances travel through the blood affecting cells all over the body. In this method, the immune system naturally fights the cancer.

### What can I do to prevent stomach cancer?

Make sure you get yearly examination from your

physician, especially if you have had frequent unexplained abdominal problems or a family history of stomach cancer. Implement a healthy diet, limiting the intake of meat and increasing the amount of fruits and vegetables. Exercise and maintain a healthy weight. Avoid smoking and exposure to pollution. Again, do not forget to talk to your physician if you experience any of the risk factors associated with this type of cancer.

PGS/MD/01/2011E

## INFORMATION ON STOMACH CANCER



Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre  
Lahore: 7-A Block R-3, Johar Town, Lahore, Pakistan  
Tel: +92 42 359 5000 | UAN: 042-111-155-555  
Peshawar: 5-B, Sector A-2, Phase-V, Hayatabad, Peshawar, Pakistan  
Tel: +92 91 588 5000 | UAN: 091-111-155-555  
[www.shaukatkhanum.org.pk](http://www.shaukatkhanum.org.pk)



**Shaukat Khanum**  
Memorial Cancer Hospital  
and Research Centre



## What is stomach cancer?

The stomach is part of the digestive system. It is a hollow organ in the upper abdomen, located under the ribs. The stomach has five layers: the mucosa is the inner most layer, followed by the submucosa, the muscle layer, the subserosa, and finally, the serosa on the outside.

Stomach cancer starts in the inner layers of the stomach and moves into the deeper layers over time, eventually reaching the outer most layer and then spreading to other organs such as the liver, pancreas, oesophagus, and intestines if not caught early.

## What are its symptoms of stomach cancer?

The most common symptoms of stomach cancer include discomfort in the stomach area, feeling full or bloated after a small meal, nausea, vomiting, difficulty swallowing, blood in stool and unexplained weight loss.

While at most times these symptoms are not due to cancer, if you are experiencing any of these symptoms you should schedule an appointment with see your doctor to diagnose the problem and have it treated as early as possible.

## What are the risk factors?

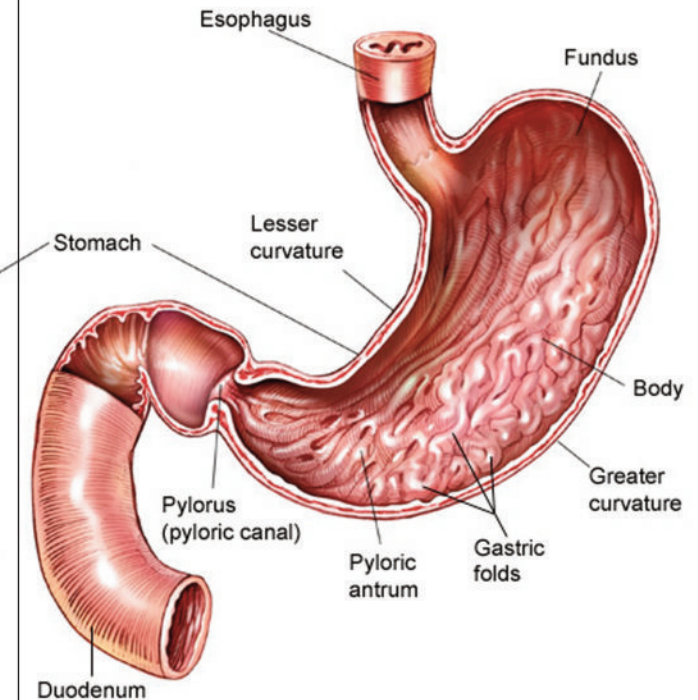
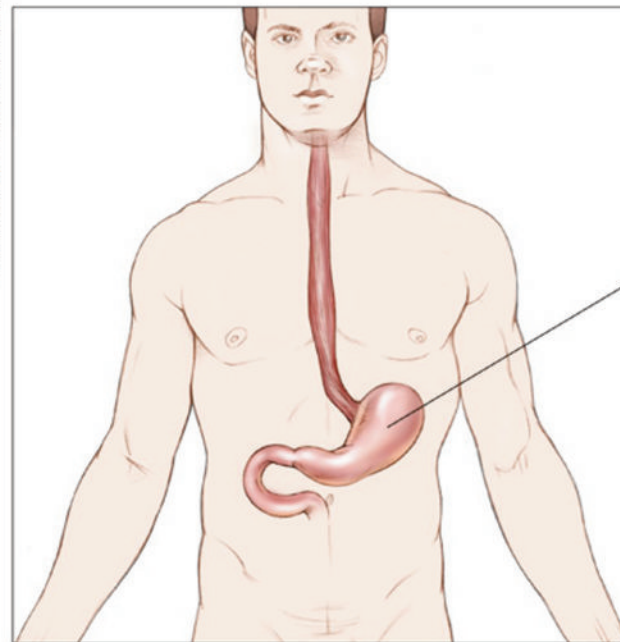
While the exact cause of stomach cancer is unknown, the risk factors of this type of cancer include:

**1 Age** – Most individuals with this disease are

72 years of age or older.

- 2 Diet** – If your diet is high in fats that are smoked, salted, grilled or pickled, and prepared with some particular spices, you have a higher risk of developing stomach cancer.
- 3 Smoking** – If you smoke, you are at a higher risk of developing this type of cancer.
- 4 Certain health problems** – If you have had stomach surgery or history of chronic gastritis, which is the long-term inflammation of the stomach lining, or pernicious anaemia, a blood

Robert Morreale/Visual Explanations, LLC



disease that effects the stomach, you have higher risk of developing stomach cancer.

- 5 Gender** – Men are more likely to develop stomach cancer than women.

## What tests will I have to take to detect it?

Your doctor will go through your medical history and conduct a physical exam first, checking your abdomen for fluid or swelling, and also swelling in your lymph nodes.

Your doctor may conduct an endoscopy, using a