

# Bladder Cancer

Bladder cancer usually occurs within the lining of the bladder, which stores the body's urine, and can grow into the bladder wall. The exact causes of bladder cancer are unknown. Some of the symptoms for bladder cancer are quite similar to other non-cancer related illnesses. If detected early and treated, the overall five-year survival rate for bladder cancer is 77 percent, and 96 percent for noninvasive bladder cancer.

## Statistics

- In 2020, approximately 81,400 new cases of bladder cancer will be diagnosed in the United States.
- Approximately 17,980 Americans will die from bladder cancer in 2020.
- About 4,544 Texans are expected to be diagnosed with bladder cancer, with an estimated 1,078 deaths from the disease in 2020.
- The incidence of bladder cancer is about twice as high in Caucasians as in African Americans and Hispanics.

## Risk Factors

- **Age:** The risk of developing bladder cancer increases with age. Approximately 90 percent of those diagnosed are over the age of 55.
- **Family History:** People with a family history of bladder cancer are at greater risk of developing the disease. Certain inherited gene syndromes can also increase risk of bladder cancer.
- **Personal History:** Those who have had bladder cancer in the past are at an increased risk of recurrence. Those with chronic bladder conditions are at higher risk.
- **Gender:** Men are four times more likely than women to develop bladder cancer.
- **Tobacco:** Risk of bladder cancer among smokers is approximately four to seven times higher than in nonsmokers. About half of all bladder cancer cases are caused by smoking.
- **Chemical Exposure:** People who work with certain chemicals or in certain industries are at higher risk for developing bladder cancer. Industry examples include dye, leather, paint, printing, textiles, and rubber. Individuals with exposure to high levels of arsenic in their drinking water are also at a greater risk, as are those exposed to the chemotherapy drug cyclophosphamide or dietary supplements with aristolochic acid. Those who took the diabetes drug pioglitazone for more than a year may be at higher risk.
- **Parasites:** People infected with certain kinds of parasites face a higher risk.

## Symptoms and Signs

The following may be symptoms of bladder cancer, but could be linked to other health conditions:

- Blood in the urine; urine may appear orange, pink, or dark red in color
- Struggle to urinate, or weak urine stream
- Painful or burning urination
- Frequent urination or feeling the need to urinate without being able to produce urine
- Lower back pain confined to one side
- Frequent nighttime urination
- Weight loss due to lack of appetite
- Weakness or fatigue
- Swelling of feet
- Bone pain

## Prevention

While there is no definite prevention method, people should do any or all of the following to reduce risk: practice safety precautions if you work with certain chemicals that have been linked to a higher bladder cancer incidence, don't smoke, eat a well-balanced diet of fruits and vegetables, and consume plenty of liquids.

## Treatment Options

Bladder cancer, depending on the stage, may be treated by different members of the cancer care team – urologists, medical oncologists, and radiation oncologists. Treatment options vary depending on how advanced the cancer is and if it has spread to other parts of the body. Physicians will determine the most appropriate treatment for each patient, but in 90 percent of cases will perform surgery alone or in combination with other treatments, such as radiation, immunotherapy, targeted therapy, intravesical therapy, or chemotherapy.

Sources: American Cancer Society, American Society of Clinical Oncology, National Cancer Institute, and Texas Cancer Registry

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