

Pancreatic cancer

Risk factors

Risk factors are certain conditions or behaviours that can increase your chances of developing diseases like pancreatic cancer.

Modifiable risk factors



Diet

A diet high in red and processed meats may increase risk. A diet high in fruits and vegetables may decrease risk.



Smoking

People who smoke are twice as likely to develop pancreatic cancer than those who don't.



Obesity

Obese people are about 20% more likely to develop pancreatic cancer compared with people of a healthy weight.



Alcohol

Consuming more than four standard alcoholic drinks a day increases your risk of developing pancreatic cancer.



Chemical exposure

Exposure to certain chemicals and heavy metals found in pesticides, dyes and chemicals may increase the risk of pancreatic cancer.

Non-modifiable risk factors



Family history

Risk increases if multiple first-degree relatives had the disease or if any were diagnosed under 50.



Age

Most cases occur in adults over 60 and the average age at the time of diagnosis is 71.



Diabetes

Long-standing (over 5 years) diabetes increases risk.



Pancreatitis

People with chronic (long-term) or hereditary pancreatitis have a higher risk of developing pancreatic cancer.



Inherited genetic syndromes

Inherited gene changes (mutations) can be passed from parent to child. These gene changes may cause as many as 10% of pancreatic cancers.



Pancreatic cysts

Most pancreatic cysts are benign (not cancerous) but some cysts such as intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasms (IPMNs) can turn into cancer.



For more information and resources
visit pancreaticcentre.org.au