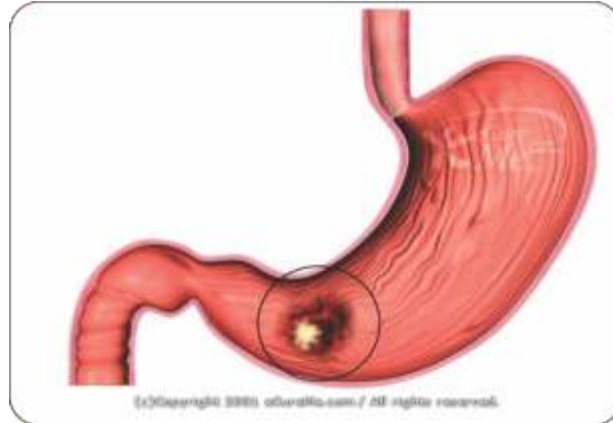




*STOMACH
CANCER*





Stomach cancer is the second leading cause of cancer related deaths worldwide. It is more common in men as compared to women.

What causes stomach cancer?

Various factors are attributed to the causation of the disease. Few of them are enumerated below:

Chronic gastritis

Helicobacter pylori infection.

Chronic gastric ulcer.

Nutritional factors like high salt consumption, high nitrate consumption, increased consumption of smoky food, low dietary vitamin A and C.

Cigarette smoking.

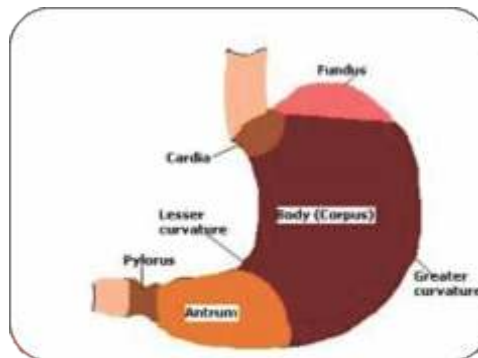
Occupational factors such as coal workers or rubber workers.

Genetic factors like type A blood group, pernicious anaemia, positive family history, hereditary non polyposis colon cancer etc.

Which part of stomach is involved most commonly in stomach cancer?

Stomach is anatomically divided into several parts like cardia, fundus, body, pylorus and antrum. Cardia is the proximal most part of stomach which joins with esophagus, fundus is the upper part of stomach which is mostly filled with air and pylorus and antrum comprises of distal part which joins with duodenum. Incidence in decreasing order is as follows-

Proximal third (esophagogastric junction and cardia) – 50%
Pylorus and antrum- 30%
Fundus and body- 20%.



What are the common complaints of a patient of stomach cancer?

Vague heaviness in the stomach, especially after eating food.
Abdominal pain.
Unexplained weight loss.
Early satiety.
Vomiting of blood.
Jaundice.
Distension of abdomen.

What are the investigations needed to diagnose and stage the stomach cancer?

Upper GI endoscopy- Here a flexible tube with attached camera is inserted into upper airway, esophagus and stomach and any abnormality like ulcer, growth etc. can be detected.



Endoscopy guided biopsy confirms the diagnosis.

CT-Scan of abdomen is important to know the local extent as well as the stage of the disease. Tumor markers like CEA (Carcino-embryonic antigen) levels in the blood correlate well with the tumor size and its aggressiveness.

What are the various treatment options available for stomach cancer?

In early stage stomach cancer, surgical resection is the treatment of choice and for advanced stage cancer a combination of radiotherapy and chemotherapy is required. For stage I stomach cancer which is operable the 5 year survival rate is 90% whereas for stage II onward disease, the 5 year survival rate falls down to 10%.

