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How is the research on pancreatic cancer funded?

➔ Although it is the 4th leading cause of death by cancer, research on pancreatic cancer receives less than 2% of all cancer research funding in Europe⁶.

➔ In the UK, £42 million are allocated to breast cancer research, while £5.2 million go to pancreatic cancer research⁷.

Additional resources should be created to fund research into pancreatic cancer.

➔ Improved survival rates depend on an improved knowledge of the disease, increasing the ability to diagnose it earlier.

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What is the situation of pancreatic cancer in comparison to other cancers?

Although pancreatic cancer is the 4th biggest cause of death from cancer there is no mention of its burden or any policies related to it in the European Commission's 2014 Report on "Cancer screening in the European Union".

➔ Between 1975 and 2011, the incidence and mortality of breast cancer decreased by 43%, due to the uptake of mammographic screening and improvements in therapy⁸.

➔ While it represented 16.8% of the mortality from the deadliest cancers in 2012, pancreatic cancer only represented 3.4% of parliamentary questions on these cancers tabled in the European Parliament between 2009 and 2014.

Thanks to improved screening and treatment, survival rates in prostate cancer, breast cancer and colorectal cancer have significantly increased.

There is a discrepancy between the severity and mortality of the disease and its political prioritization.

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How can I have more information?

➔ In November 2014, a European Multi-Stakeholder platform on Pancreatic cancer was created. It is composed of European experts, academics, patients, journalists, clinical practitioners and policy makers who are committed to raising awareness around pancreatic cancer with a view to improving standards of care, diagnosis and data collection for patients suffering from pancreatic cancer across Europe. For more information, please consult our website (www.pancreaticcancereurope.eu). The platform is financially supported by Celgene and Baxalta.



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10 things you need to know about Pancreatic Cancer

1

What is pancreatic cancer?

➔ Pancreatic cancer arises when malignant cells in the pancreas, a glandular organ behind the stomach, begin to multiply and form a mass.

➔ It has the lowest survival rate of all cancers¹.

➔ Pancreatic cancer is currently the 4th biggest cause of death by cancer in Europe¹. If no action is taken, it is expected to be the 2nd leading cause of cancer death⁹.

¹ Malvezzi M, Bertuccio P, Levi F, La Vecchia C, Negri E, et al. European cancer mortality predictions for the year 2013. *Annals of Oncol.* 2013; 24:792-800

² Carrato A, Falcone A, Ducreux M, Valle J, Parnaby A, Djazouli K, Alnwick-Allu K, Hutchings A, Palaska C, Parthenaki I. A systematic review of the burden of pancreatic cancer in Europe: Real-world impact on survival, quality-of-life, and costs. *J Gastrointest Cancer* 2015 Sep;46(3):201-11

³ "Pancreatic cancer – A deadly disease with a highly unmet medical need" – Presentation by Prof. Matthias Löhr – 26/09/2012 – http://www.europarl.europa.eu/stoa/webdav/site/cms/shared/2_events/workshops/2012/20121010/Matthias%20Loehr.pdf [Retrieved September 2015]

⁴ Bray F, Ren JS, Masuyer E, Ferlay J, et al. Global estimates of cancer prevalence for 27 sites in the adult population in 2008. *Int J Cancer* 2013; 132:1133-45.

⁵ Pancreatic Cancer Action – Risk factors for pancreatic cancer – <https://pancreaticcanceraction.org/about-pancreatic-cancer/causes-and-risks/> – Retrieved September 2015

⁶ "15 facts on Pancreatic Cancer", European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC) <http://www.ecpc.org/edu/pancreas/249-15-key-facts-on-pancreatic-cancer> [Retrieved September 2015]

⁷ Pancreatic Cancer Action – Research Funding – <https://pancreaticcanceraction.org/pancreatic-cancer/stats-facts/research-funding/> Retrieved 18 February 2015

⁸ SEER Stat Fact Sheet : Breast cancer – <http://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/breast.html> – Retrieved 18 February 2015

⁹ Pancreatic Cancer Action Network. The alarming rise of pancreatic cancer deaths in The United States: Why we need to stem the tide today, 2012. http://www.pancan.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/incidence_report_2012_executive_summary.pdf [Last accessed September 2015]

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How severe is it?

➔ Only 20% of all cases of pancreatic cancer are operable³. A prime reason for inability to treat patients is late diagnosis.

➔ It has the **lowest survival rate** of all cancers. Patients affected with pancreatic cancer lose **98% of their healthy life expectancy** at the point of diagnosis².

➔ Due to severe underdiagnosis, the overall median survival for a person diagnosed with metastatic pancreatic cancer is **4.6 months**².

Today, a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer is generally associated with a death sentence and few patients are alive one year after diagnosis⁴, while an earlier diagnosis could help reduce the mortality of the disease. If diagnosed in time, chances of survival increase.

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Who is at risk?

➔ Pancreatic cancer affects men and women equally.

➔ **Obesity** increases the risk in approximately **12%** of all pancreatic cancers⁵.

➔ **Age** is the biggest risk factor for pancreatic cancer. Its incidence increases from the age of 45.

➔ People with **diabetes** have twice the risk of developing pancreatic cancer⁵.

➔ People with a **family history** of pancreatic cancer have almost double the risk of having it.

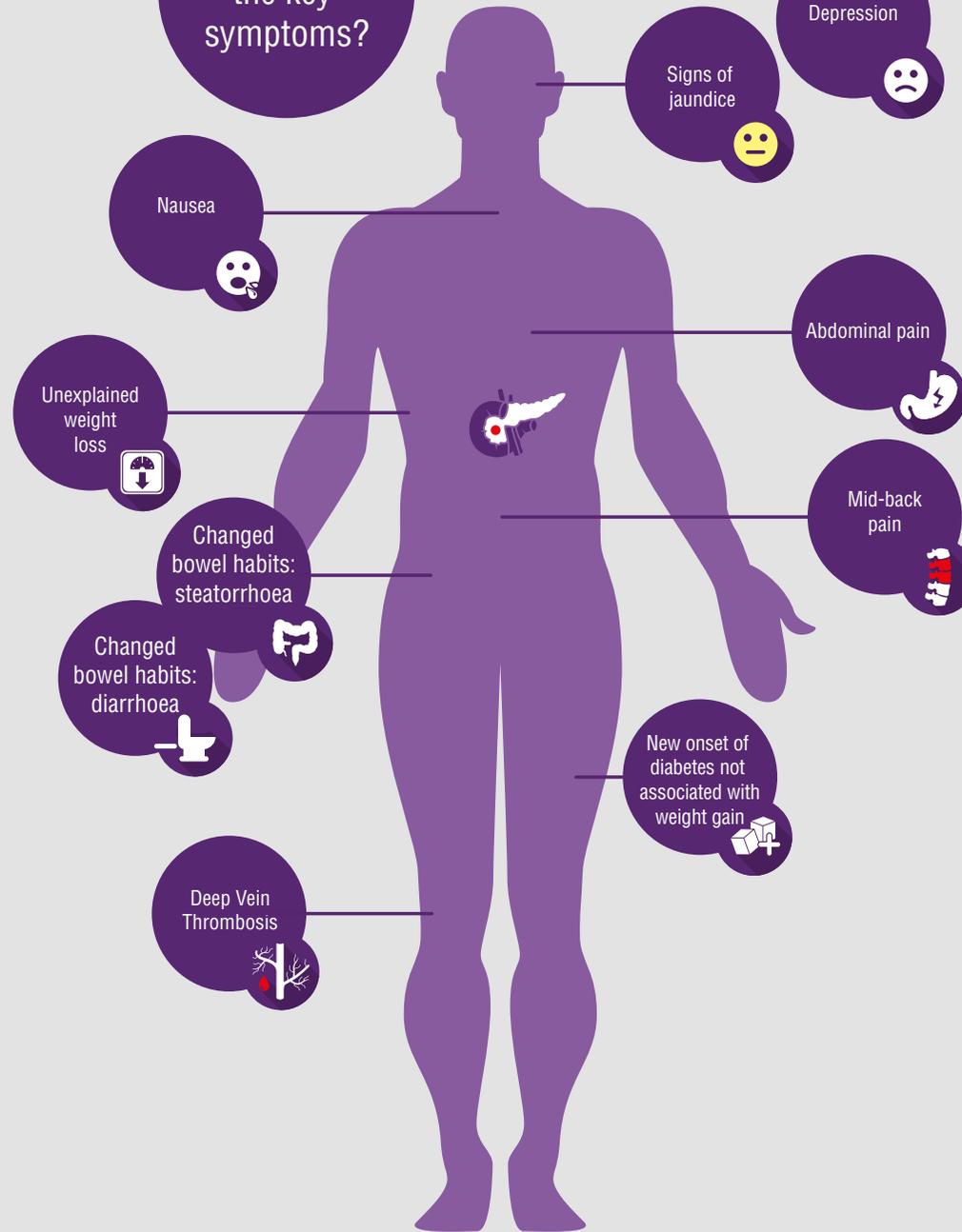
➔ Cigarette **smoking** accounts for nearly 1/3 of cases⁵.

➔ **Previous cancers and other conditions** (Gastrointestinal inflammatory diseases, chronic pancreatitis and gum disease) are associated with an increased risk of pancreatic cancer.

➔ Chronic pancreatitis is most often caused by long term drinking of **alcohol**.

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What are the key symptoms?



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How is pancreatic cancer diagnosed?

GP visit
➔ Referral to a specialist
➔ Tests and investigations (blood tests, ultrasound scan and radiography scans, biopsy)

➔ Due to the **lack of identified biomarkers**, genes or imaging modalities, diagnosis is difficult to make.

➔ In 40% of patients diagnosed, the disease stage is advanced and cancer is already metastatic³.

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What are the standards of therapy?

Treatment options depend on the stages of the tumor. They can be:

➔ Adjuvant chemotherapy

➔ Surgery

➔ Palliative and supportive therapy

➔ Chemotherapy and/or chemoradiation

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Has there been any progress on this disease in the past years?

➔ Pancreatic cancer is the only cancer with a mortality on the rise in both sexes¹.

➔ Due to late diagnosis and low treatment approval, survival rates in pancreatic cancer have not changed meaningfully during the last 40 years. Little progress on new therapies is notably due to low research funding.