

Quick Guide to **Pancreatic Cancer**

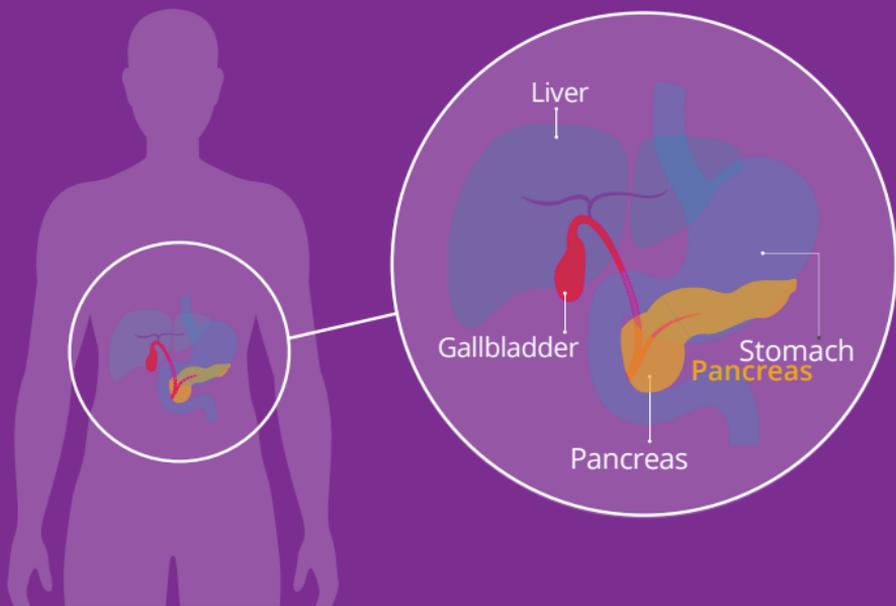
Symptoms and
Key Information

pancreatic
cancer
action

Saving lives through early diagnosis

pancreaticcanceraction.org

What is Pancreatic Cancer?



Pancreatic cancer occurs when cells in the pancreas grow uncontrollably to form a lump or mass, usually referred to as a 'cancerous tumour'.

The pancreas has two main jobs in the body:

- Making enzymes, these help to digest (break down) foods.
- Making hormones, such as insulin and glucagon, which control blood sugar levels.

In this way, the pancreas helps the body use and store the energy it gets from food. When cancer develops in the pancreas it affects how the organ works, which can make you very ill.

Why Should I Know About Pancreatic Cancer?

- ▶ Pancreatic cancer is the UK's 5th biggest cancer killer
- ▶ In most cases, it can develop unexpectedly with no family connection to the disease
- ▶ Knowing the signs and symptoms means you can act on any concerns you might have, sooner
- ▶ Early diagnosis can significantly increase your chance of receiving potentially life saving surgery.

The facts

- ▶ Pancreatic cancer can affect any adult. It occurs equally in men and women
- ▶ Almost 10,000 people are diagnosed each year in the UK (that's the same as 909 football teams)
- ▶ 9,000 people die each year, and less than 8% survive 5 years. Only 5% survive 10 years
- ▶ There is no screening test for pancreatic cancer and surgery is currently the only cure
- ▶ The 1 year survival rate if you receive a diagnosis via your GP is 32%. If you're admitted to A&E, that number is as low as 12%.

What are the Symptoms?

As pancreatic cancer develops in the body, it may cause some of the following signs and symptoms:



Jaundice



Unexplained weight loss



Mid-back pain or discomfort



Upper abdominal pain or discomfort



Indigestion



Changes in the way you poo

- **Diabetes** - Which has developed recently and is not linked to weight gain
- **Low mood or depression** - Continued feeling of sadness
- **Fatigue** - Feeling tired or exhausted all the time
- **Loss of appetite** - Not feeling like eating
- **Nausea and vomiting** - Feeling and being sick.

What do I do if I Think I Have These Symptoms?

If you, or someone you know, is **experiencing any** of these **symptoms** and they are not normal for you, **do not ignore them.**

Go and see your GP straight away.

It can be useful to **keep a diary of your symptoms** so that when you visit your GP, they can easily understand what has been happening. Visit our website: panact.org/symptoms-diary to download this.

If you would like to **talk to someone before going to the GP** please **call us on 0303 040 1770.**

What are the Risks?

The cause of pancreatic cancer is unknown. However, there are some factors which make developing pancreatic cancer more likely:



Obesity



Diabetes



Age



Tobacco
Products



Chronic
Pancreatitis



Family
History

Eating a healthy balanced diet, staying a healthy weight and not smoking are ways you can reduce your risk. If none of these risk factors are relevant to you, this does not mean it cannot affect you. For more information visit:

panact.org/causes

About Pancreatic Cancer Action

We are a national charity dedicated to saving lives through early diagnosis and improving the quality of life for those affected by pancreatic cancer.

How we do this...

- ▶ Raising public awareness and knowledge of pancreatic cancer and its symptoms to achieve early diagnosis.
- ▶ Lobbying the government and key stakeholders for change to advance the standard of healthcare for individuals.
- ▶ Providing free pioneering educational resources and accredited eLearning training modules for our medical and healthcare communities to diagnose pancreatic cancer sooner.
- ▶ Funding innovative research to improve early diagnosis, develop effective treatments and to improve pancreatic cancer outcomes.
- ▶ Providing free, easy to understand and **certified patient information** and **offering practical, emotional support** to all affected by pancreatic cancer.

"As a pancreatic cancer survivor, I am living proof that early diagnosis is achievable, that there is hope and improving survival rates is possible!" **Ali Stunt, CEO and founder of Pancreatic Cancer Action**



If you would like to donate and help us take action against pancreatic cancer, please visit:

panac.org/donate or **scan the QR code**



For more information about pancreatic cancer and Pancreatic Cancer Action, please get in touch.

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Saving lives through early diagnosis

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