

LIVER CANCER

Liver Cancer is a type of cancer that starts in the liver. **Cancer** occurs when cells in the body grow out of control.

The American Cancer Society's estimates that in 2021, about 42,230 (29,890 in men and 12,340 in women) new cases of liver cancer and intrahepatic bile duct cancer will be diagnosed in the United States.

The liver is one of the largest organs in the body. The liver pulls out any bad things in the blood, such as toxins, and removes them from the body.

STATISTICS

- According to the Office of Minority Health,
 - In 2019, chronic liver disease was the **sixth leading cause of death** for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, 25-44 years old.
 - Asian American men are **60 percent more likely to die** from liver and IBD cancer, as compared to non-Hispanic white men.
 - The incidence rate for liver and IBD cancer is **1.8 time higher** for Asian American women as compared to non-Hispanic white women.
- According to American Cancer Society, liver cancer rates in Laotian and Vietnamese men are **2 to 4 times higher** than those in Chinese, Korean, and Filipino men. Liver cancer rates in Laotian and Vietnamese men are almost **10 times higher** than Asian Indian and Pakistani men, who have the lowest rates.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

In the early stages, liver cancer may not have symptoms that can be seen or felt. However, as the cancer grows larger, people may notice one or more of these common symptoms.

- Discomfort in the upper abdomen on the right side
- A swollen abdomen
- A hard lump on the right side just below the rib cage
- Pain near the right shoulder blade or in the back
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes)
- Easy bruising or bleeding
- Unusual tiredness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss for no known reason

RISK FACTORS

- Being overweight or having obesity
- Having a long-term Hepatitis B virus or Hepatitis C virus infection
- Smoking cigarettes
- Drinking alcohol
- Having cirrhosis (scarring of the liver, which can also be caused by hepatitis and alcohol use)
- Having nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (extra fat in the liver that is not caused by alcohol)
- Having diabetes or non-alcoholic fatty liver disease
- Having hemochromatosis, a condition where the body takes up and stores more iron than it needs
- Eating foods that have aflatoxin (a fungus that can grow on foods, such as grains and nuts that have not been stored properly)

PREVENTION

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Don't smoke, or quit if you do
- Avoid drinking too much alcohol
- Get vaccinated against Hepatitis B
 - Hepatitis B vaccine is recommended for all infants at birth and for adults who may be at increased risk
 - Hepatitis B is a liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus.
- Get tested for Hepatitis C, and get medical care if you have it
 - Hepatitis C is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus
 - A blood test called a Hepatitis C antibody test can tell you if you've been infected recently or in the past



RESOURCES

- **American Cancer Society:**
 - cancer.org
- **National Cancer Institute:**
 - cancer.gov
- **Global Liver Institute:**
 - globalliver.org
- **U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs:**
 - hepatitis.va.gov
- **Hep B United**
 - hepunited.org
- **'Imi Hale Native Hawaiian Cancer Network:**
 - imihale.org/education_materials.htm
- **California State University, Fullerton:**
 - wincart.fullerton.edu/cancer_edu/index.htm
- **Asian American Health Initiative:**
 - aahiinfo.org
- **Pacific Cancer Programs:**
 - pacificcancer.org
- **Asian American Cancer Support Network:**
 - aacsn.org



Signs and Symptoms, Risk Factors, and Prevention Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention