

PHC

Pancreatic Cancer Awareness

What is the Pancreas?

The pancreas is an organ about 6 inches long and shaped like a thin pear lying on its side, found deep inside your body, behind the stomach and in front of the spine. It has two main jobs in the body, it makes Enzymes – these help to digest (break down) foods and Hormones – such as insulin and glucagon, which control blood sugar levels.

The pancreas contains two types of glands the Exocrine gland which make the enzymes which help digest (break down) foods and the Endocrine gland which the hormones such as insulin and glucagon, which control blood sugars.

What is Pancreatic Cancer?



Pancreatic cancer occurs when a malignant tumour forms in the pancreas. There are two types of pancreatic cancer, Exocrine tumours which make up the majority of pancreatic cancers and occur in the cells of the lining of the duct that runs into the intestine and Endocrine tumours which are much less common and develop in our endocrine glands, that release hormones (which regulate some processes in our bodies), these are then circulated around the body..

What are the symptoms of Pancreatic Cancer?



The main symptoms are:

- * Jaundice - Yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes, and/or very itchy skin.
- * Unexplained Weight Loss - Weight loss without trying.
- * Upper abdominal pain or discomfort - Which may radiate to the back.
- * Mid-back pain or discomfort - Which may be eased by leaning forward.
- * Indigestion - Not responding to medication.
- * Pale and Smelly Stools - That don't flush easily.

Other symptoms may include:

- * Loss of appetite
- * Pain on eating
- * Nausea and vomiting
- * New onset diabetes - not associated with weight gain
- * Low mood or depression.

How is Pancreatic Cancer diagnosed and treated?



Patients who present themselves with one or more of the signs and symptoms that suggest pancreatic cancer need a quick investigation. This is often by a CT scan or PET-CT scan and early referral to a specialist unit for other investigations. These investigations and tests will help the specialist team diagnose, treat and monitor their condition.

Treatments for pancreatic cancer vary and are dependent on the stage of the disease and fitness level of the patient. Please visit

<https://pancreaticcanceraction.org/about-pancreatic-cancer/treatment/> for more details.



The Importance of Diet and Nutrition

Nutrition can be a major focus for people who have been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. The disease itself, along with treatments such as surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy, can change your body's ability to digest and absorb nutrients from food.

For more information and helpful recipes and tips, please visit

<https://pancreaticcanceraction.org/about-pancreatic-cancer/diet-and-nutrition>

For more information about Pancreatic Cancer, please visit:

<https://pancreaticcanceraction.org>

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/pancreatic-cancer>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pancreatic-cancer/>