

Kidney Cancer

Kidney cancer is cancer that originates in the kidneys, which filter blood and remove waste. The most common type of kidney cancer in adults is renal cell carcinoma that begins in the lining of the tubes of the kidney.

Statistics

- In 2022, an estimated **79,000 new cases** of kidney and renal pelvis cancers are expected to be diagnosed in the U.S.
- An estimated **13,920 Americans** are expected to die from the disease in 2022.
- In Texas in 2022, an estimated **6,569 new kidney and renal pelvis cancers** are expected to be diagnosed, and **1,345 Texans** are expected to die from the disease.
- The average age of people when diagnosed with kidney cancer is **64**. Kidney cancer is **rare under age 45**.
- Of the many types of kidney cancer, about **90 percent of cases** diagnosed are renal cell carcinoma.
- Kidney cancer is **among the 10 most common cancers**. While the **incidence rate has risen since the 1990s**, due in part to better imaging tests that detected cancers that previously would be unidentified, the death rate declined slightly.

Risk Factors

The exact causes of kidney cancer are unknown; however, some risk factors are linked to the disease.

- **Obesity:** Kidney cancer risk increases for people who are overweight.
- **Race:** African Americans, Native Americans, and Alaska Natives have a slightly increased risk of kidney cancer.
- **Certain medicines:** Use of common pain relievers such as acetaminophen, aspirin, and ibuprofen, and diuretics have been linked to renal cell carcinoma. Use of phenacetin, a once-popular non-prescription pain reliever but banned since 1983, has been linked to renal cell carcinoma.
- **High blood pressure:** People with high blood pressure are at a higher risk of developing the disease. It is not known whether the condition or the medicine, including diuretics, used to treat it is to blame for the increase in risk.
- **Gender:** Men are about twice as likely to develop the disease as women.
- **Family history:** Those with a strong family history of renal cell carcinoma are at a higher risk to develop the cancer. Brothers and sisters of those diagnosed are at the highest risk.
- **Smoking:** Tobacco use has a strong link to kidney cancer, and smoking doubles the risk for developing the disease. The risk decreases over time if tobacco use ceases.
- **Kidney disease:** Those with advanced kidney disease and those on dialysis have an increased risk.
- **Hereditary disease:** People with rare inherited conditions including Birt-Hogg-Dube syndrome, hereditary leiomyoma-renal cell carcinoma, hereditary papillary renal cell carcinoma, familial renal cancer, tuberous sclerosis complex, Cowden syndrome, and von Hippel-Lindau disease have an increased risk.
- **Exposure to chemicals:** Some research links exposure to cadmium, and organic solvents such as trichloroethylene, to an increased risk of developing kidney cancer.

Symptoms

Kidney cancer varies with each patient; some have no symptoms in the early stages. People with any of the following symptoms should consult their physician:

- Blood in the urine
- Low blood counts (anemia)
- Unexplained weight loss
- Unexplained low back or side pain
- Loss of appetite
- Fatigue
- Unexplained fever
- Enlarged veins around a testicle
- Abdominal, side, or lower back mass
- Bowel blockage
- Swollen abdomen, kidney area, ankles, or legs

Tips for Prevention

Kidney cancer cannot be completely prevented. However, certain lifestyle changes, such as quitting smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, controlling high blood pressure, and reducing or all together avoiding exposure to environmental toxins, are believed to decrease the risk of developing the disease.

Treatment Options

Kidney cancer, depending on the stage, may be treated by a team of specialists including medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, and urologists. Treatment options vary widely depending on the cancer's type, stage, and the patient's overall health. Treatment options include removing part or all of the kidney, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, radiation therapy, targeted therapy, surveillance, palliative medicine, ablation, and other local therapies. Many patients receive a combination of treatments.

About Texas Oncology

Texas Oncology is an independent private practice with more than 500 physicians and 210 locations across the state. Meeting the oncology needs of Texans for more than 35 years, the practice includes Texas Center for Proton Therapy, Texas Breast Specialists, Texas Oncology Surgical Specialists, Texas Urology Specialists, and Texas Center for Interventional Surgery. As a lead participant in US Oncology Research, Texas Oncology played a role in the development of more than 100 FDA-approved therapies. For more information, visit www.TexasOncology.com.

Sources: American Cancer Society, American Society of Clinical Oncology, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Cancer Institute, and Texas Cancer Registry



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