

# Stomach Cancer



IS A DEADLY CANCER & A GROWING PROBLEM IN THE U.S.

## DIAGNOSES & DEATHS

***In 2025, an estimated 30,300 Americans will be diagnosed with stomach cancer and 10,780 will die from the disease.***

### STOMACH CANCER SYMPTOMS AND FACTS

With a five-year relative survival rate of just **36 percent**, stomach cancer is considered a Recalcitrant/Deadliest Cancer, as defined by the Recalcitrant Cancer Research Act of 2012. When diagnosed at a late or distant stage, five-year survival **drops to 7 percent**.<sup>1</sup>

Many symptoms associated with stomach cancer, including indigestion, heartburn, and nausea, are easily mistaken for other gastric problems. In fact, initial diagnosis of stomach cancer often is delayed because up to **80 percent of patients are asymptomatic during early stages**.<sup>2</sup>

Research has shown that the vast majority (over 70 percent) of stomach cancers are caused by a *Helicobacter pylori* (*H. pylori*) infection<sup>3,4,5</sup> and approximately 10 percent of stomach cancers are associated with one of several hereditary genetic syndromes.<sup>6</sup>

Other risk factors include chronic gastritis, certain diets, smoking and family history.

There are increased rates of *H. pylori* among military service members and those in rural communities. **Based on a recently published study, one fourth of the U.S. veteran population is at risk for benign and malignant consequences of chronic *H. pylori* infection.**

However, studies show that when *H. pylori* is detected through testing and treated to eradication, the risk of developing stomach cancer drops significantly.<sup>8,9</sup>

Active duty individuals are at increased risk of contracting *H. pylori* especially if they are deployed outside the continental United States in areas in which *H. pylori* is highly prevalent, or who are subject to crowded living conditions.<sup>10</sup>

### 5 year survival rate = 36%



### Disturbing Trends

While the incidence of stomach cancer in young adults has decreased in most countries, there has been a marked increase in the US, particularly among young women. Additionally, alarming inequalities in stomach cancer mortality persist. Compared to mortality in White people, Native Americans are 2-3 times more likely to die and Black people are twice as likely to die.<sup>4,11,12</sup>

National Mortality Rates By Race and Ethnicity (2018-2022)



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Data source: National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024  
Rate per 100,000, age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

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### American-led Research is Providing a Path Forward for this Deadly Disease

Past federal investments in stomach cancer research have identified high-risk groups and potential avenues for early detection and treatment. While more research is needed, American scientists and physicians have driven key breakthroughs.

Thanks to initiatives like the federally funded Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA), researchers have unlocked critical insights into the unique genetic properties of stomach cancer, which is paving the way for more precise and effective treatments.<sup>13</sup> Further, thanks to American-led research, physicians can now analyze biomarkers on stomach cancer cells to develop personalized treatment plans.<sup>14</sup>

These advances have the potential to improve survival, quality of life, and treatment precision. Strong public-private partnerships and strategic federal investments have positioned the U.S. as a leader in patient-centered cancer research.

Continued funding can reduce healthcare costs by enabling earlier diagnoses and better treatments, particularly for veterans, rural communities, and high-risk populations. Supporting stomach cancer research ensures more Americans benefit from cutting-edge innovations while maintaining U.S. leadership in biomedical advancements.

### TOGETHER, WE CAN TAKE ACTION!

**We ask Congress to ensure that U.S. leadership in biomedical research continues and is expanded so that we can finally make true progress in improving stomach cancer survival. Specifically, we ask that you:**

- Complete work on the FY 2025 spending bills, maintain stomach cancer as a disease eligible for research funding under the DoD's PRCRP and provide \$130 million for the program, as well as provide the highest possible funding levels for the NCI for FY 2025 and 2026.
- Support the continued eligibility of stomach cancer for research funding in the FY 2026 DoD's PRCRP.
- Support language in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2026 calling for the DoD to develop a plan, cost estimate, and feasibility study for implementing H. pylori testing for certain at-risk members of our U.S. Armed Services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT  
[WWW.DEBBIESDREAM.ORG/2025-CONGRESSIONAL-OFFICES-DOCUMENTS/](http://WWW.DEBBIESDREAM.ORG/2025-CONGRESSIONAL-OFFICES-DOCUMENTS/)

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