

Liver cancer

Liver cancer is cancer that begins in the cells of the liver, it can be classified in two types: primary (cancer that begins in liver tissue) or secondary (cancer that spreads to the liver after starting in some other location).

Cancer that spreads to the liver is more common than cancer that begins in the liver cells.

Symptoms:

In the early stages there may be no symptoms at all, however in the later stages the following symptoms may appear:

- A lump below the rib cage on the right side of the abdomen
- Pain near the right shoulder or on the right side of the abdomen
- Jaundice (a disease that causes skin to yellow)
- Unexplained weight loss
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Loss of appetite
- Dark-colored urine
- Bloating

Causes:

Liver cancer occurs when liver cells develop mutations in their DNA, sometimes the reason can be chronic hepatitis infections, but other sometimes liver cancer happens in people with no underlying diseases and it's not clear what causes it.



Risk Factors:

- Other liver diseases, including hepatitis B or C (viral diseases that attack the liver) or cirrhosis (a disease that causes scarring)
- A family history of hepatitis or liver cancer
- Obesity
- Gender: men are more likely to get liver cancer than women are

Prevention:

- If you choose to drink alcohol, limit the amount you drink.
- If your current weight is healthy, work to maintain it by choosing a healthy diet and exercising most days of the week.
- Get vaccinated against hepatitis B
- Take measures to prevent hepatitis C

Treatment:

Surgical treatments:

- Radiofrequency ablation: using a probe with electrodes that destroys cancer cells.
- Partial hepatectomy: removing part of the liver, ranging from a smaller wedge to an entire lobe.
- Total hepatectomy and liver transplant: removing the whole liver and replacing it with one from an organ donor.



Chemotherapy:

Chemotherapy uses drugs to destroy cancer cells and to prevent them from reproducing. Chemotherapy can be pills or injections.

Another type of chemotherapy for liver cancer is known as chemoembolization of the hepatic artery, in which the chemotherapy drug is combined with another substance to block the artery. The purpose of this therapy is to starve the tumor of blood in order to kill it, and to apply chemotherapy directly to the tumor. The liver's blood flow is maintained by the hepatic portal vein.

