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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/bileductcancer.html>

Bile Duct Cancer

Also called: Cholangiocarcinoma

Your liver makes a digestive juice called bile. Your gallbladder [<https://medlineplus.gov/gallbladderdiseases.html>] stores it between meals. When you eat, your gallbladder pushes the bile into tubes called bile ducts [<https://medlineplus.gov/bileductdiseases.html>]. They carry the bile to your small intestine. The bile helps break down fat. It also helps the liver get rid of toxins and wastes.

Bile duct cancer is rare. It can happen in the parts of the bile ducts that are outside or inside the liver. Cancer of the bile duct outside of the liver is much more common. Risk factors include having inflammation of the bile duct, ulcerative colitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ulcerativecolitis.html>], and some liver diseases.

Symptoms can include:

- Jaundice
- Itchy skin
- Fever
- Abdominal pain

Tests to diagnose bile duct cancer may include a physical exam, imaging tests of the liver and bile ducts, blood tests, and a biopsy.

Treatments include surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy.

NIH: National Cancer Institute

Start Here

- What Is Bile Duct Cancer (Cholangiocarcinoma)? [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/liver/bile-duct-cancer>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/higado/cancer-vias-biliares>]
- What Is Bile Duct Cancer? [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/bile-duct-cancer/about/what-is-bile-duct-cancer.html>] (American Cancer Society)

Diagnosis and Tests

- Alkaline Phosphatase [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/alkaline-phosphatase/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/fosfatasa-alcalina/>]
- Bile Duct Cancer Diagnosis [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/liver/bile-duct-cancer/diagnosis>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/higado/cancer-vias-biliares/diagnostico>]
- Bilirubin Blood Test [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/bilirubin-blood-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/examen-de-bilirrubina-en-sangre/>]

• Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diagnostic-tests/endoscopic-retrograde-cholangiopancreatography>]  (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/pruebas-diagnosticas/colangiopancreatografia-retrograda-endoscopica>]

- Tests for Bile Duct Cancer [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/bile-duct-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/how-diagnosed.html>] (American Cancer Society)

Prevention and Risk Factors

- Bile Duct Cancer Causes and Risk Factors [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/liver/bile-duct-cancer/causes-risk-factors>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/higado/cancer-vias-biliares/causas-factores-riesgos>]

Treatments and Therapies

- Bile Duct Cancer Treatment [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/liver/bile-duct-cancer/treatment>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/higado/cancer-vias-biliares/tratamiento>]
- Endoscopic retrograde cholangio pancreatography (ERCP) - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100180_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100180_1.htm]
- Radiation Therapy for Bile Duct Cancer [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/bile-duct-cancer/treating/radiation.html>] (American Cancer Society)
- Surgery for Bile Duct Cancer [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/bile-duct-cancer/treating/surgery.html>] (American Cancer Society)

Living With

- Living as a Bile Duct Cancer Survivor [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/bile-duct-cancer/after-treatment/follow-up.html>] (American Cancer Society)

Related Issues

- Bile Duct Risk Factors [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/bile-duct-cancer/causes-risks-prevention/risk-factors.html>] (American Cancer Society)
- What Causes Bile Duct Cancer? [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/bile-duct-cancer/causes-risks-prevention/what-causes.html>] (American Cancer Society)

Specifics

- Bile Duct Cancer Stages [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/liver/bile-duct-cancer/stages>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/higado/cancer-vias-biliares/estadios>]

Genetics

- Cholangiocarcinoma: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/cholangiocarcinoma>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Statistics and Research

- Cancer Statistics: Liver and Intrahepatic Bile Duct Cancer [<https://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/livibd.html>]  (National Cancer Institute)
- Key Statistics for Bile Duct Cancer [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/bile-duct-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>] (American Cancer Society)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Bile Duct Neoplasms [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Bile+Duct+Neoplasms%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Cholangiocarcinoma [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Cholangiocarcinoma%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

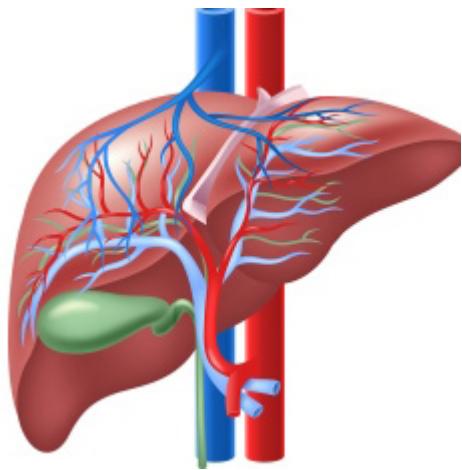
- Article: STRONG II trial: stereotactic body radiation therapy following chemotherapy for unresectable... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40669914>]
- Article: Sunitinib as Second-Line Treatment in Advanced Intrahepatic Cholangiocarcinoma: Results From the... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40631456>]
- Article: Endobiliary radiofrequency ablation in recurrence and unresectable Perihilar cholangiocarcinoma. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40619373>]
- Bile Duct Cancer -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Bile+Duct+Neoplasms%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bdat%5D+AND+%28patient+education+handout%5Bpt%5D+OR+guideline%5Bpt%5D+OR+clinical+trial%5Bpt%5D%29++NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- American Cancer Society [<https://www.cancer.org/>]
- ASGE: Find a Doctor [<https://www.asge.org/find-a-doctor-results>] (American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy)
- Choosing a Cancer Doctor [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/managing-cancer/finding-care/where-to-find-cancer-care/choosing-a-cancer-doctor.html>] (American Cancer Society)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.org/es/cancer/como-sobrelevar-el-cancer/encontrar-tratamiento/como-elegir-un-medico-y-un-hospital/como-seleccionar-a-un-medico.html>]
- Find a Gastroenterologist (GI Doctor) [<https://gi.org/patients/find-a-gastroenterologist/>] (American College of Gastroenterology)
- National Cancer Institute [<https://www.cancer.gov/>] 
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol>]
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov>] 
- Organizations that Offer Cancer Support Services [<https://supportorgs.cancer.gov/home.aspx>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://supportorgs.cancer.gov/home.aspx?lang=2>]

Patient Handouts

- Bile duct stricture [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000220.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000220.htm>]
- Cholangiocarcinoma [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000291.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000291.htm>]
- ERCP [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007479.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007479.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Abdominal MRI scan [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003796.htm>]

Bile duct stricture [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000220.htm>]

Biopsy - biliary tract [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003894.htm>]

Cholangiocarcinoma [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000291.htm>]

Endoscopic retrograde cholangio pancreatography (ERCP) - series
[https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100180_1.htm]

ERCP [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007479.htm>]

Fecal fat [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003588.htm>]

Gallbladder radionuclide scan [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003826.htm>]

Percutaneous transhepatic cholangiogram [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003820.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Bile Duct Diseases [<https://medlineplus.gov/bileductdiseases.html>]

Gallbladder Cancer [<https://medlineplus.gov/gallbladdercancer.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Bile Duct Cancer* is the National Cancer Institute [<http://www.cancer.gov/>]

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