

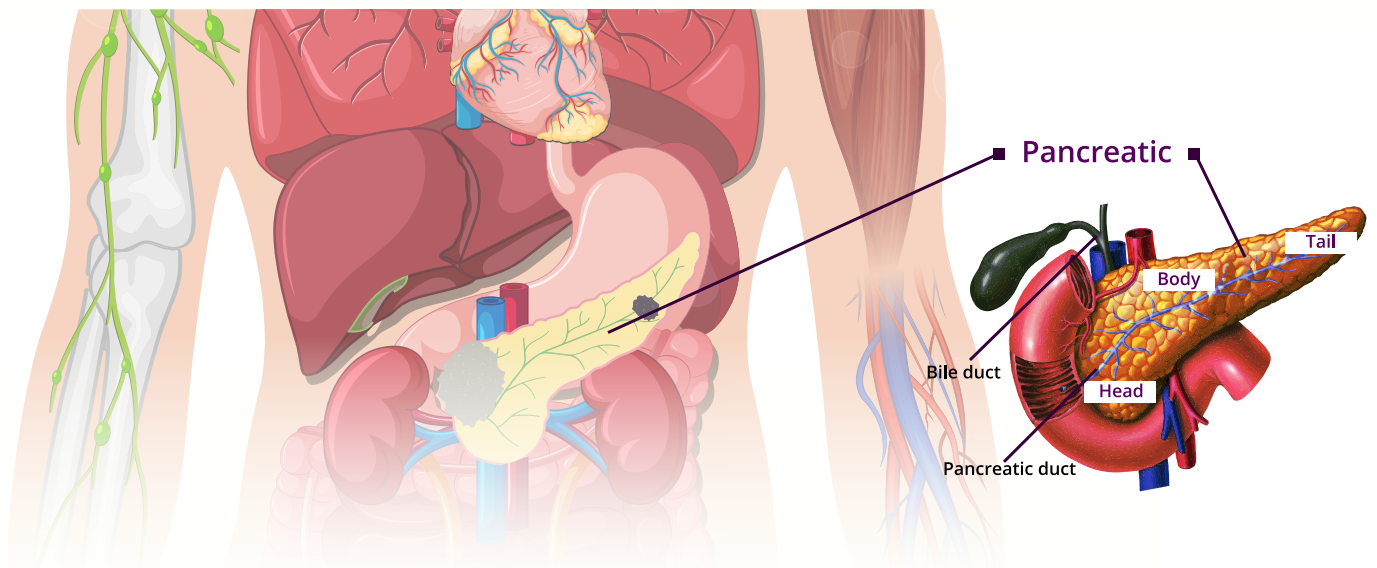
# ABOUT PANCREATIC CANCER

The pancreas is an organ located behind the stomach. It releases enzymes that help with digestion, as well as hormones that help regulate blood sugar levels. If you have pancreatic cancer, you won't be able to feel a lump or a mass when you press on the outside of your abdomen.

The pancreas is a gland about six inches long that is shaped like a thin pear, located in the abdomen. It is surrounded by the stomach, small intestine, liver, spleen and gallbladder. The wider end of the pancreas is called the head, the middle section is called the body, and the narrow end is called the tail.

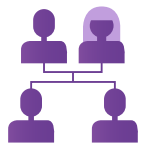
The pancreas has two main functions :

- To make juices that help digest food
- To make hormones, such as insulin and glucagon, that help control blood sugar levels. Both of these hormones help the body use and store the energy it gets from food that you eat.



The Singapore Cancer Registry states that pancreatic cancer is the 5th most common cause of cancer deaths in Singapore males and 6th most common cause of cancer deaths in Singapore females.

Pancreatic cancer is sometimes called a silent disease because it's hard to detect early, when it's most treatable. Besides knowing the symptoms, knowing the risk factors for pancreatic cancer is your best protection against this disease. It's not clear what causes pancreatic cancer, but research studies have identified that your chances of developing pancreatic cancer are higher if you :



have a family history of the cancer



are a smoker



are obese



are a diabetic



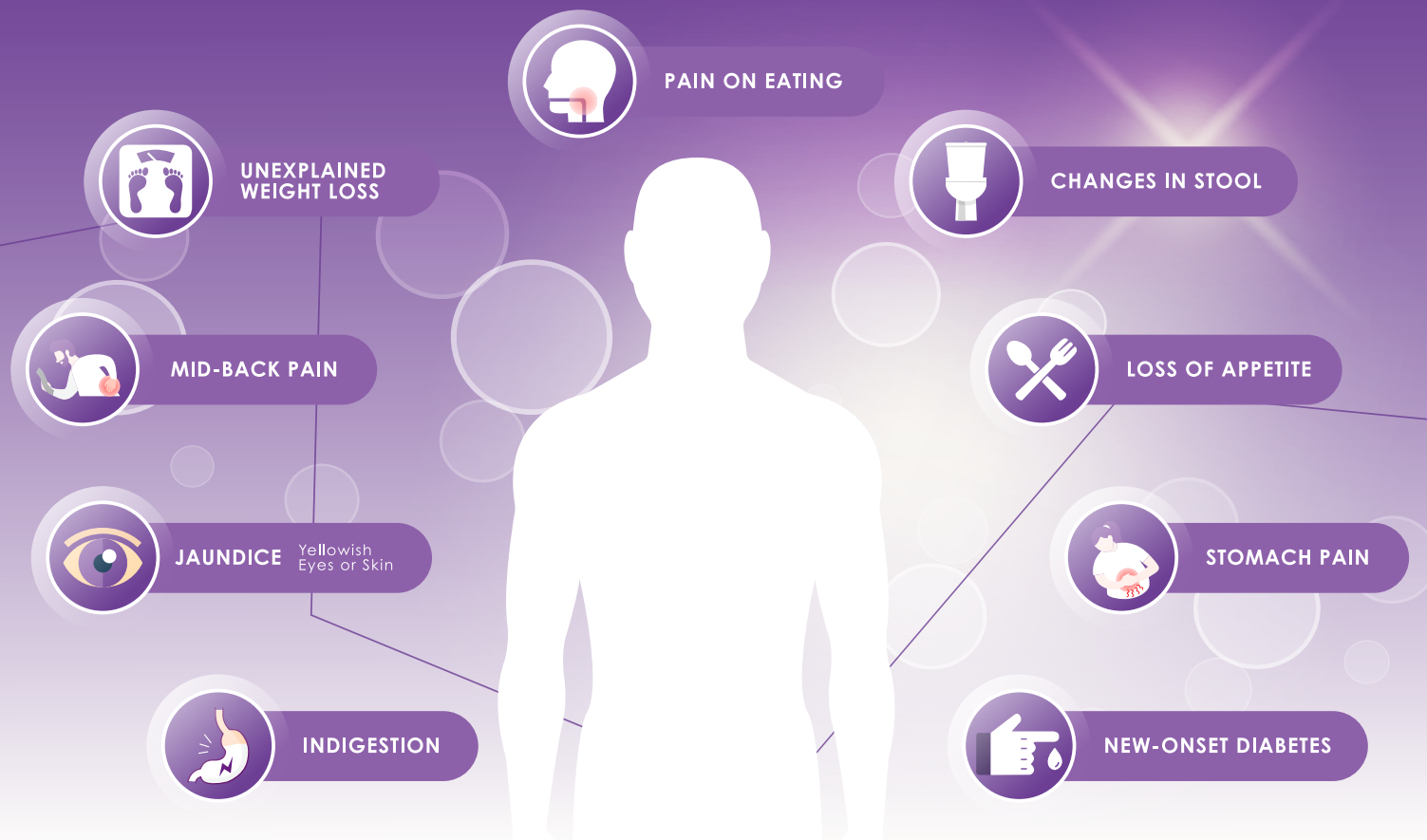
have a diet that is high in red and processed meats

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One of the major challenges associated with pancreatic cancer is that it usually does not have recognisable symptoms in the early stage. This cancer grows insidiously and initially does not cause symptoms. The small size of the pancreas makes it hard to detect tumours with a physical examination. By the time symptoms occur, cancer cells are likely to have spread (metastasized) to other parts of the body.

## WARNING SIGNS YOU SHOW KNOW:

Possible Symptoms of Pancreatic Cancer



Having one or more of the symptoms above does not mean you have pancreatic cancer. These symptoms may be caused by other conditions. Still, if you have any of these symptoms, it is important to have them checked by a doctor if you experience any unexplained symptoms that worry you. Early diagnosis is vital and may increase the chances of survival.

### PREVENTION

You may reduce your risk of pancreatic cancer if you :

- stop smoking - If you smoke, try to stop. Talk to your doctor about strategies to help you stop.
- maintain a healthy weight. If you are at a healthy weight, work to maintain it. If you need to lose weight, aim for a slow and steady weight loss. Combine daily exercise with a balanced diet in smaller portions to help you lose weight.
- choose a healthy diet. Focus on foods that are rich in protein, low in animal fats, and contain antioxidants. A diet full of colourful fruits and vegetables and whole grains may help reduce your risk of cancer.

We urge you to speak to your doctor immediately if you are experiencing any of these symptoms. Seek help early.

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