

Bladder Cancer

The bladder is a hollow organ that stores urine. Cancer of the bladder starts when cells in the bladder grow uncontrollably and form tumors. If not treated, it can spread to other parts of the body. While not all cases of bladder cancer are preventable, you can lower your risk by making healthy lifestyle decisions. Currently, there is no standard, routine screening test for people of average risk. Therefore, it's important to pay attention to the early and advanced symptoms listed below.

Statistics

- In 2026, an estimated 84,530 new cases of bladder cancer will be diagnosed in the United States.
- An estimated 17,870 people will die from bladder cancer in 2026.
- The five-year survival rate for bladder cancer is 79%, largely because about half of cases are diagnosed at an early stage before the cancer has spread.
- In Texas, approximately 5,050 new cases of bladder cancer are expected in 2026.

Risk Factors

Although bladder cancer is not completely preventable, reducing risk factors can significantly lower a person's risk of developing it:

- **Tobacco Use:** Smoking introduces harmful chemicals into your body that damage and cause mutations in bladder cells.
- **Exposure to Chemicals in the Workplace:** The rubber, leather, printing, textile, and paint industries may expose workers to toxic chemicals that increase the risk of bladder cancer. If your work exposes you to chemicals, it's important to follow workplace safety protocols.
- **Diet High in Processed Meats:** Bacon, sausages, and deli meat are often preserved with nitrates, which can convert into compounds that cause DNA mutations and damage bladder cells.

Early Symptoms

Bladder cancer symptoms are often present early and may include:

- Blood in the urine
- Changes in urine frequency or stream, such as a weak stream or the urge to urinate, even when your bladder isn't full
- Urination that's painful or burns

Advanced Symptoms

When bladder cancer spreads to other parts of the body, it can cause other symptoms:

- Inability to urinate
- Lower back pain on one side
- Unexplained weight loss or loss of appetite
- Feeling tired or weak
- Swollen feet
- Bone pain

Prevention

While there is no sure way to prevent bladder cancer, there are some steps you can take to lower your risk:

- Avoid or stop smoking and avoid secondhand smoke
- Limit exposure to harmful chemicals, especially in the workplace
- Maintain a healthy diet rich in protein and fiber

Treatment Options

Depending on the stage of disease and the tumor's size and location, bladder cancer may be treated with one or a combination of the following:

- Surgery
- Intravesical therapy, medication placed directly into the bladder
- Chemotherapy
- Radiation therapy
- Immunotherapy
- Targeted therapy

About Texas Oncology

Founded in 1986, Texas Oncology is an independent, physician-led practice and a member of the US Oncology Network. With more than 550 physicians and 300 locations across Texas, Texas Oncology serves over 250,000 cancer patients each year.

Texas Oncology provides advanced care across 19 specialties and offers a comprehensive clinical trials and research program that has contributed to the development of more than 100 FDA-approved cancer therapies. Learn more at [TexasOncology.com](https://www.texasoncology.com).