

Bladder Cancer

What is bladder cancer?

Urothelial carcinoma, also known as transitional cell carcinoma, is the most common type of bladder cancer, accounting for approximately **90% of cases in industrialised nations, including the UK.**^{1,2}

Rarer types of bladder cancer include:¹

Squamous cell bladder cancer

Adenocarcinoma

Small cell bladder cancer

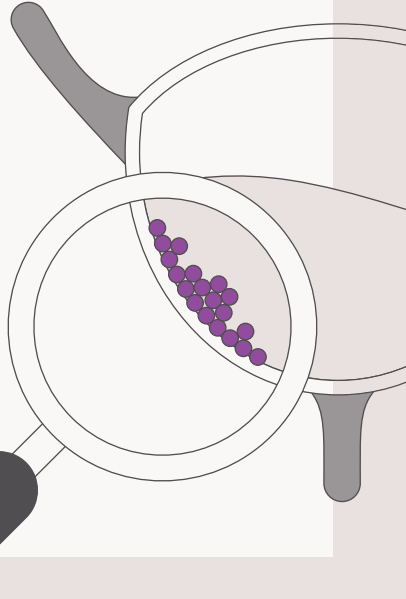
Sarcoma

Bladder cancer usually starts in the inner lining of the bladder. This lining has two names:²

- the transitional epithelium
- the urothelium

If the cancer **spreads into or through the muscle layer** of the bladder, it's called **muscle invasive bladder cancer**. Doctors might also use the terms:^{1,3}

- locally advanced bladder cancer
- metastatic or advanced bladder cancer

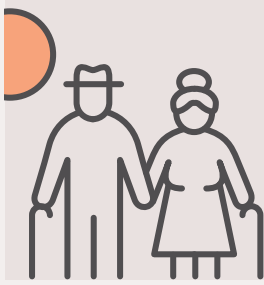


Prevalence

Bladder cancer is the **11th most common cancer** in the UK⁴



Bladder cancer is **more common in older people** with **56% of cases** and **71% of deaths** occurring in people aged 75 and over (2017 – 2019)⁴



There are around **10,500 new cases** diagnosed (2017 – 2019) and **5,600 deaths** (2017 – 2019) every year⁴

More men than women are diagnosed with the disease, with **73% of cases occurring in males**⁵



Risk factors

Bladder cancer is associated with some common **risk factors** including:⁶



Chemicals at work



Smoking



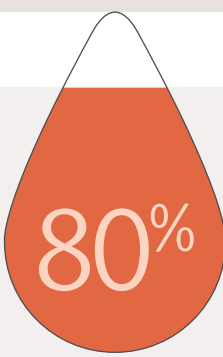
Family history



Infections with schistosomiasis (bilharzia)

Signs and symptoms

The main symptom of bladder cancer is blood in the urine, **80% of people** experience this. The **other symptoms** of bladder cancer can include:⁷



Pain or a burning sensation when passing urine



Passing urine very suddenly (urgency)



Pain in your back, lower tummy or bones



Passing urine very often (frequency)



Weight loss for no reason



Feeling tired and unwell

Treatment options

A patient's **treatment options** are largely dependent on the stage of disease and may include:⁸



Surgery



Chemotherapy



Immunotherapy



Radiotherapy



Speak to your doctor or healthcare team for more advice or information about bladder cancer or if you are concerned about any symptoms or risk factors that you may have.

References:

1 Cancer Research UK. Bladder cancer types. Available at <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/bladder-cancer/types-stages-grades/types> Last accessed: July 2025 **2** Leslie SW, Soon-Sutton TL, Aeddula NR. Bladder Cancer. [Updated 2024 Aug 15]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2025 Jan-. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK536923/> **3** Cancer Research UK. Invasive bladder cancer staging. Available at: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/bladder-cancer/types-stages-grades/muscle-invasive> Last accessed: July 2025 **4** Cancer Research UK. Bladder cancer statistics. Available at: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/statistics-by-cancer-type/bladder-cancer/incidence#heading=Zero> Last Accessed: July 2025 **5** Cancer Research UK. Bladder cancer incidence statistics. Available at: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/statistics-by-cancer-type/bladder-cancer/incidence#heading=Zero>. Last accessed: July 2025 **6** Cancer Research UK. Bladder cancer risks and causes. Available at <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/bladder-cancer/risks-causes> Last accessed: July 2025 **7** Cancer Research UK. Bladder cancer symptoms. Available at <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/bladder-cancer/symptoms> Last accessed: July 2025 **8** Cancer Research UK. Treatment for bladder cancer. Available at: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/bladder-cancer/treatment>. Last Accessed: July 2025