

What is biliary tract cancer? [Back to Trial Page](#)



Biliary tract cancer is a **rare type of cancer**, with around **211,000 people** diagnosed worldwide each year^{1,2}

Who might develop it?

Some risk factors for biliary tract cancer include³⁻⁵:



Bile duct disease (primary sclerosing cholangitis)



Chronic liver disease



Parasite infection (liver flukes)



Obesity

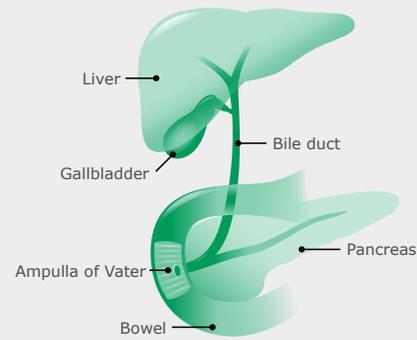


Gallstones



Family history and genetics

The biliary tract and cancer



There are 4 types of biliary tract cancer⁶:

- Intrahepatic cholangiocarcinoma:** cancer that forms in the bile ducts within the liver^{6,7}
- Extrahepatic cholangiocarcinoma:** cancer that forms in the bile ducts outside the liver^{6,7}
- Gallbladder cancer:** cancer that forms in the gallbladder⁶
- Ampullary cancer:** cancer that forms in the ampulla of Vater, which connects the bile ducts to the small intestine^{6,8}

What symptoms are associated with biliary tract cancer?

Biliary tract cancer patients may not experience symptoms in the early stages of the disease.^{9,10} In some cases, the cancer may block the bile ducts. The **most common signs of this** include⁸⁻¹⁰:

Jaundice, or yellowing of the skin and eyes, which can cause the skin to itch

Pain in the upper right side of the stomach

Nausea and vomiting

Pale-colored stools

Dark-colored urine

Losing weight without trying

How can biliary tract cancer be treated?

Disease management may vary depending on^{11,12}:

- When the diagnosis was made (disease stage)
- The location of the cancer
- Whether the cancer has spread
- The general health status

A doctor may discuss the following treatment options¹³⁻¹⁵:



Surgery



Radiation



Chemotherapy



Targeted therapy

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