

AIDS patients face risk for esophageal, stomach cancers

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People with AIDS are at increased risk for developing esophageal and stomach carcinoma as well as non-Hodgkin lymphomas (NHLs), according to a new study in *Gastroenterology*, the official journal of the American Gastroenterological Association.

Provided by American Gastroenterological Association

"People diagnosed with AIDS are living longer due to improved therapies. However, they remain at increased risk of developing a number of different cancers," said E. Christina Persson, PhD, of the [National Cancer Institute](#) and lead author of this study. "An elevated risk of esophageal and stomach cancers had been observed before, but we were able to look at risk for subtypes of these malignancies."

In this study, researchers analyzed data from the HIV/AIDS Cancer Match Study, which links data collected from 1980 to 2007 for 16 U.S. population-based HIV and AIDS and cancer registries. They compared risks of stomach and esophageal cancers in 596,955 people with AIDS with those of the general population.

Those with AIDS had a 69 percent and 44 percent increased risk of esophageal and stomach carcinomas, respectively. The risks of NHLs—tumors of [immune cells](#)—in the stomach and esophagus were also strongly elevated. Additionally, the researchers' analysis showed a significant 53 percent increased risk of cancer of the lower stomach in people with AIDS. Since *Helicobacter pylori* infection is one of the causes of this type of [stomach cancer](#), one explanation for an increased risk of this cancer might be an increased prevalence of *H. pylori* in people with AIDS.

Another explanation for this elevated [cancer risk](#) could be more frequent use of tobacco and alcohol among people with AIDS. Programs encouraging [tobacco cessation](#) and alcohol moderation may help reduce the occurrence of esophageal and stomach carcinomas among these patients.

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