



AWARENESS

## PANCREATIC CANCER: EARLY DIAGNOSIS IS KEY

**November 19th, 2020 is World Pancreatic Cancer Day. Every year, on the third Thursday of November, we are reminded about one of the deadliest forms of cancer there is: pancreatic cancer.**

Globally, pancreatic cancer is the eleventh most common cancer in women and twelfth in men (2018), as published by the World Cancer Research Fund.

Your pancreas is located behind your stomach and is responsible for supplying your body with enzymes that help digestion.

According to Mayo Clinic, pancreatic cancer typically doesn't present symptoms until it is advanced. There also isn't any routine screening process that can detect it early.

This is likely why its five-year survival rate is in the single digits.

For this reason, it is vital to know the symptoms and immediately seek medical advice if you notice these symptoms in yourself or a loved one.

### Symptoms

Mayo Clinic states that the following are symptoms of pancreatic cancer:

- Jaundice (skin and eyes turn yellow)
- Abdominal pain that radiates to your back

- Loss of appetite or unintended weight loss
- Light-coloured stool
- Dark-coloured urine
- Itchy skin
- Diabetes that proves difficult to manage
- Blood clots
- Fatigue

### Risk factors

According to Healthline, the cause of pancreatic cancer cannot be drawn to a single cause. However, certain risk factors have been identified:

- A family history of pancreatic cancer
- Smoking
- Obesity
- Routine exposure to pesticides and chemicals

It is important to raise awareness of this lethal type of cancer. Spare a thought this November for those who have been diagnosed or are supporting a loved one through treatment.