

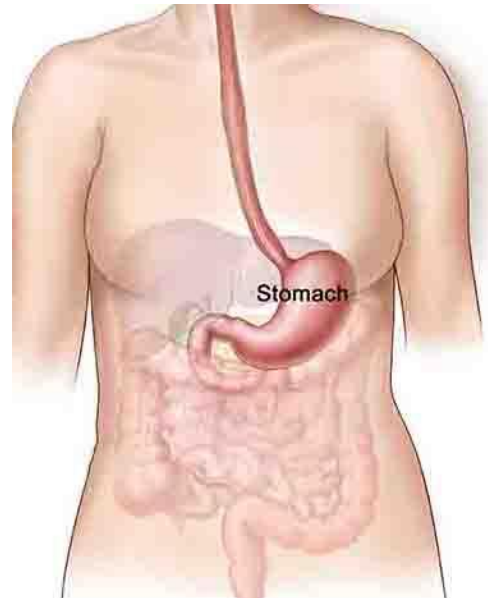


Stomach Polyps (Gastric Polyps)

You've probably heard of *colon* polyps. Colon polyps are small growths that may occur on the inner lining of the colon (large intestine). They are relatively common and, if undetected, can sometimes turn into colon cancer. This is the reason for [screening colonoscopy](#). Did you know you can also develop polyps in your stomach? *If you have recently been diagnosed with stomach polyps, don't be alarmed.*

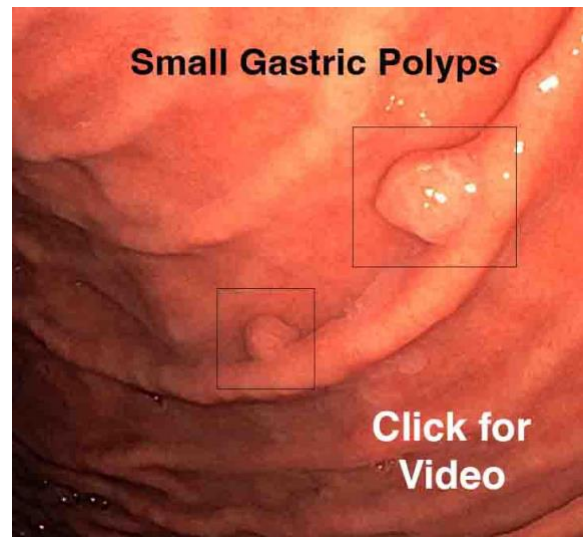
What are Stomach Polyps?

Stomach polyps are growths that form on the inner lining of the stomach. These can be singular or multiple, varying in size. Most stomach polyps are discovered incidentally during an endoscopy ("upper scope") test performed for other reasons. While benign in most cases, a very small percentage can evolve into stomach cancer.



Types of Stomach Polyps

1. **Hyperplastic Polyps:** These common polyps often arise due to inflammation or chronic gastritis. They are typically small, benign, and rarely transform into cancer. However, very large hyperplastic polyps may have a higher risk of cancer and thus require closer monitoring or removal. Sometimes hyperplastic polyps are associated with a stomach infection called [Helicobacter pylori](#).
 2. **Fundic Gland Polyps:** These are associated with the long-term use of proton pump inhibitors like Prilosec, commonly prescribed for acid reflux. While generally benign, they can be numerous and might necessitate a change in medication.
 3. **Adenomatous Polyps:** These polyps are much less common but carry a higher risk of becoming cancerous, especially if they are large. Regular surveillance and possible removal are crucial for these polyps.
- **Neuroendocrine Tumors:** These are very rare but significant and originate from hormone-producing cells in the stomach. Gastric neuroendocrine tumors are subdivided into three types. Their potential to be cancerous varies, necessitating individualized treatment approaches.



Causes and Risk Factors

Several factors can influence the development of stomach polyps:

- **Chronic Gastritis:** Persistent inflammation in the stomach, often due to *H. pylori* infection, can lead to polyp formation.
- **Genetic Conditions:** Conditions like Familial Adenomatous Polyposis (FAP) increase the risk of developing certain types of polyps.
- **Medications:** Prolonged use of proton pump inhibitors is linked to the development of Fundic Gland polyps.
- **Age and Lifestyle:** Older adults are more likely to develop polyps. Lifestyle factors, including diet and smoking, can also play a role.

Symptoms

Stomach polyps are asymptomatic. They cause no digestive symptoms or abdominal pain. Rarely, large polyps can cause anemia.

Diagnosis

Stomach polyps are typically found during an [upper GI endoscopy](#). If polyps are discovered, a biopsy may be performed to determine their type and assess for cancerous changes.

Treatment

Treatment strategies vary based on the type, size, and nature of the polyps:

- **Observation:** Small, benign polyps require no immediate treatment but periodic monitoring.
- **Polypectomy:** Larger polyps, or those with cancer risk, are often removed via endoscopy.
- **Medication Review:** If PPIs are implicated, alternative medications may be considered.
- ***H. pylori* Eradication:** Treating *H. pylori* infections can prevent the formation of certain types of polyps.
- **Regular Medical Check-ups:** Essential for those with risk factors like chronic gastritis or genetic predisposition

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January 2024



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