



## Gastrointestinal Cancers

Some of the most common and deadliest cancers found in the digestive tract. Every year, more than 100,000 Americans die of cancers that attack the esophagus, stomach, colon, pancreas, liver and other organs of the gastrointestinal system.

Colorectal cancer is the fourth-most common cancer in men and women, with an estimated 105,000 cases of colon cancer and 40,000 cases of rectal cancer diagnosed in the United States in the past year. With 34,000 cases of pancreatic cancer, 22,000 cases of stomach cancer and other cancers of the digestive system, the estimated number of new gastrointestinal cancer cases totals more than 250,000 annually.



*Creating Hope Through Science*

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awareness

gastrointestinal cancer

AMC Cancer Fund is dedicated to raising awareness and funds for the University of Colorado Cancer Center to support its outstanding programs in cancer prevention, care, education, research and service to the nation.

Visit [www.amc.org](http://www.amc.org) and learn more about the different ways to support AMC Cancer Fund.

- Make a Donation
- Sponsor one of our annual events
- Participate in or implement a workplace giving program
- Become a volunteer

*Information for this brochure provided by the University of Colorado Cancer Center, University of Colorado Hospital and University of Colorado Foundation.*



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# celebrate survival!

## Prevention

Gastrointestinal cancers are linked to lifestyle factors such as smoking, poor nutrition, obesity and lack of exercise. Lifestyle choices are especially important to prevent esophageal cancer, which is closely linked to obesity and is rising at the rate of 2% every year. Preventive measures, such as endoscopy screening of high-risk patients, are showing promise for reducing the risk of esophageal cancer.

## Early Detection

Although gastrointestinal (GI) cancers are some of the deadliest, they are also among the most preventable. New cases and deaths due to colorectal cancer have decreased significantly thanks to early detection and intervention by colonoscopy for people over age 50. In fact, colorectal cancer screening can prevent cancer by finding and removing precancerous polyps.

## Treatment

Sophisticated scans of a GI tumor are used to diagnose cancers as well as provide targeted chemotherapy treatment at a molecular level. Radiation treatment is an essential component of most cancer treatments, and new technology allows for larger doses of radiation in fewer treatments. Procedures are increasingly used to target tumors and avoid healthy tissue.

In addition, clinical trials bring new hope to many patients, especially those who have not responded to traditional treatments, by offering access to the very latest procedures. The University of Colorado Cancer Center is the only facility in the state offering early phase clinical trials in GI cancers.

AMC Cancer Fund supports the physicians and researchers at the University of Colorado Cancer Center (UCCC) who are leaders in the tremendous surge in research that is contributing new knowledge about diagnosis, treatment and prevention of gastrointestinal (GI) cancer.

UCCC is one of 40 comprehensive cancer centers designated by the National Cancer Institute, and the only one in the Rocky Mountain region. To earn this distinction, UCCC must demonstrate equal strength in research, patient care and education through a competitive grant process.



## Translational and Collaborative Approach to Care

Cancer patients of the University of Colorado Cancer Center are treated with multidisciplinary teams of experts that include oncologists, pathologists, geneticists, surgeons, radiation therapists, counselors and nurse navigators.

Clinicians and researchers work together to ensure that the science discovered in the lab is quickly and efficiently translated to new treatments for patients. This collaboration is vitally important to advancing not only the discoveries of the causes of cancer from a biological level, but the most effective way to treat cancer in humans.

## your support helps...

- develop targeted drugs and genetic profiles that can predict clinical benefit for those with colorectal cancer and could lead to long-term disease control and improved survival in colorectal cancer patients with metastatic disease.
- new treatments for advanced colorectal cancer that may not cure the disease, but may control it with maintenance therapies, much like those for diabetes and high blood pressure.
- new understanding of how GI cancer risk is passed down in families. Counselors conduct screenings, consultations and genetic testing where indicated for high-risk individuals and families.
- fund a team of experts in esophageal cancer that is among the first in America to adopt a procedure that treats precancerous esophageal tumors using an endoscope to remove the tumors without major surgery.

There are only 40 National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer centers in the United States. The University of Colorado Cancer Center is the only one in the Rocky Mountain region.