



# Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumor (GIST): A Cancer that Rises at the Digestive System

Michael Pardo\*

Department of Oncology, Copenhagen University Hospital, Denmark

## DESCRIPTION

GISTs, also known as digestive tract tumours, are rare malignancies that begin in specific cells in the wall of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. Understanding the structure and operation of the GI tract is helpful in understanding GISTs. A cancer form called a Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumour (GIST) starts in the digestive system. The stomach and small intestine are where GISTs most frequently develop. A GIST is a cell growth that is hypothesised to develop from a certain kind of nerve cell. The walls of the digestive organs contain these unique nerve cells. They contribute to how food is processed by the body.

Tiny GISTs may not show any symptoms and may develop slowly enough so that they initially pose little threat. There may be symptoms when a GIST develops. Among these could be stomach ache, a growth you can feel in your stomach, drowsiness, nausea, Vomiting, abdominal ache that worsens after eating, Having no desire to eat when you should, If you only consume a modest bit of food, you will feel full dark-coloured stools brought on by gastrointestinal haemorrhage.

GISTs can occur at any age; however they are far more prevalent in adults and extremely uncommon in children. The majority of GISTs have an unknown cause. A small percentage is brought on by genes that are inherited from parents. Targeted therapy and surgery are frequently used to treat GIST. The best therapies for you will depend on your circumstances. Certain GISTs don't require immediate treatment. Small GISTs without symptoms might not require therapy. Alternatively, you might have tests to monitor the growth of the malignancy. If your GIST spreads, you can begin therapy.

The complete GIST is intended to be removed during surgery.

For GISTs that have not progressed to other body areas, it is frequently the first course of treatment. If your tumour becomes exceedingly large or invades neighbouring structures, surgery may not be necessary. If this occurs, targeted pharmacological therapy to reduce the tumour can be your initial course of action. Surgery could be performed later. Your cancer will determine the kind of surgery you have. Surgeons can frequently do minimally invasive surgery to access the GIST. Because of this, smaller incisions in the belly are used for surgical instruments rather than a single large one.

Targeted medication therapies concentrate on particular compounds found in cancer cells. Targeted medication treatments can kill cancer cells by obstructing these substances. These medications aim to block the tyrosine kinase enzyme, which promotes the growth of cancer cells, in GISTs. Imatinib is frequently used to start targeted medication therapy for GISTs (Gleevec). Targeted medication therapies can be administered following surgery to reduce the likelihood that the cancer will return, prior to surgery to reduce the tumor's size and facilitate removal, as the initial treatment if the cancer has spread to other body areas, and if the GIST returns. If imatinib is ineffective for you or stops working, you may be prescribed other targeted medications. New medications are anticipated to become available in the future because targeted drug therapy is a hot topic in cancer research.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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**Corresponding author** Michael Pardo, Department of Oncology, Copenhagen University Hospital, Denmark, E-mail: pardo\_m8987@gmail.com

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