

# Pancreatitis

## What is Pancreatitis

Your pancreas is a gland in your body that helps break down your food and keeps your blood sugar levels steady. When your pancreas gets inflamed or swollen, this is called Pancreatitis, and it can cause extreme pain in your belly and can cause serious issues with your health.

Pancreatitis can be:

- **Acute** – It happens suddenly and may only happen once.
- **Chronic** – It can keep coming back or last for a long time.

## What causes Pancreatitis?

There are many reasons why your pancreas can get inflamed, but the most common causes are:

- Gallstones – these are hard stones that can block your pancreas.
- Too much alcohol – drinking too much alcohol can damage your pancreas.

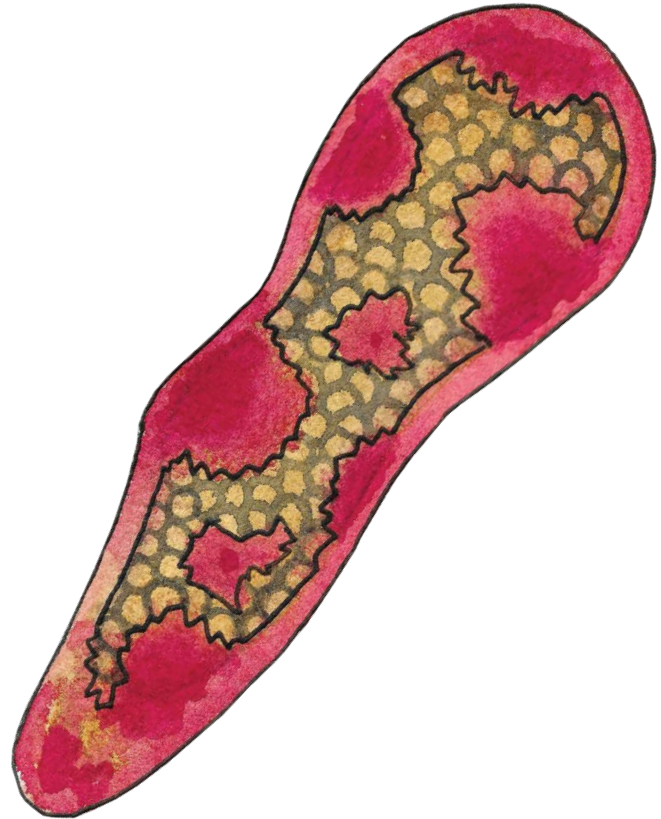
Other causes can include:

- Side effects from certain medicines.
- Injuries to the pancreas.
- Too much fat in your blood.

## How did I get Pancreatitis?

Some things make it more likely that someone will get Pancreatitis, such as:

- Drinking alcohol.
- Smoking cigarettes or using tobacco.



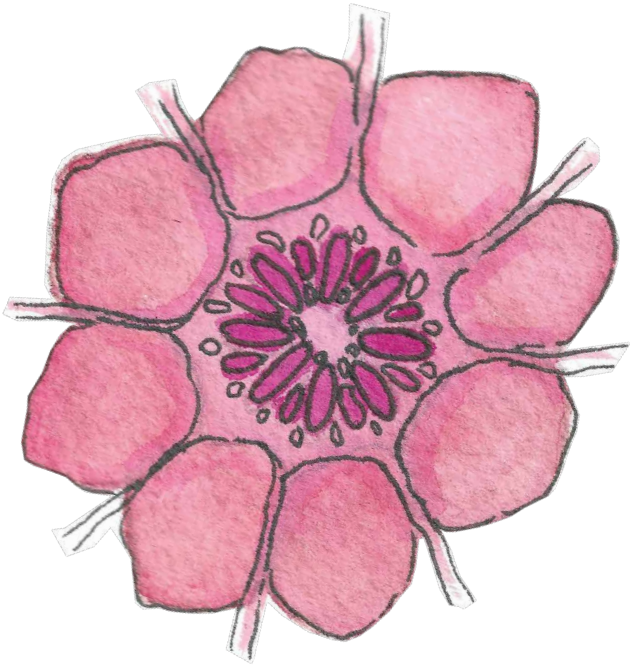
- Having gallstones.
- Being overweight.
- Being over 50 years old.
- If someone in your family had Pancreatitis.

## How do I feel / How do I look with Pancreatitis?

People with Pancreatitis often feel it differently, but the most common signs are:

- Severe pain in your belly that can spread to your back.
- Fever.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Feeling sweaty.
- If it's acute, the pain can come on quickly and be very strong.
- If it's chronic, the pain might build up slowly over time.

When your pancreas gets inflamed or swollen, this is called Pancreatitis, and it can cause extreme pain in your belly and can cause serious issues with your health.



### How does the doctor know if I have Pancreatitis?

If you're feeling unwell, you should come to your GP or the emergency room. Your GP or emergency doctor will have a yarn with you and will decide which tests will help diagnose you.

Things they might do include:

- Checking your temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure.
- Examining your belly carefully to feel for signs of illness.
- Doing blood tests to check if your pancreas is inflamed and make sure your body is coping with being sick.
- Looking at your belly using ultrasound or scans to find out what's causing your pain.

### How can we fix Pancreatitis?

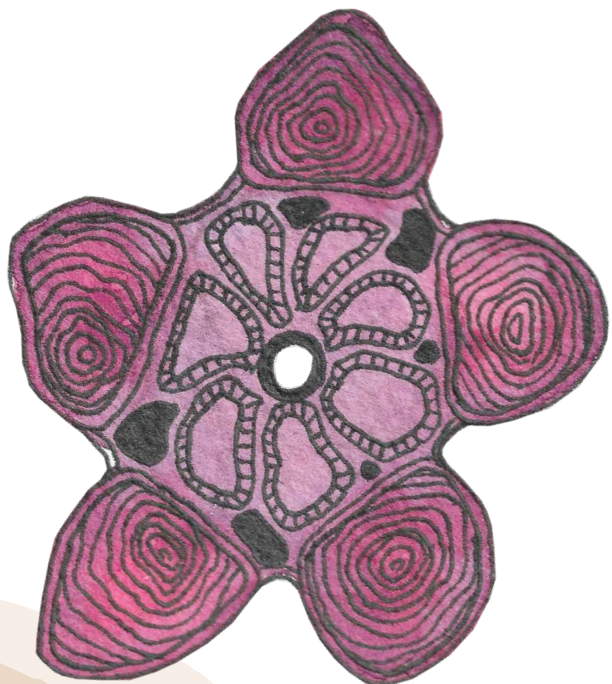
Once your doctor knows for sure that you have Pancreatitis, they will start treating it. Treatment might include:

- Fluids through a drip to help your body heal and stop dehydration, especially if you don't feel like eating or drinking.
- Pain medicine to help with the belly pain.
- Treating the cause of your Pancreatitis:
  - If you have gallstones, they might need to be removed.
  - If too much alcohol is the cause, the doctors will support you and make a plan to help you cut down.
- Checking for other problems – Sometimes Pancreatitis can lead to other issues like cysts or problems with blood sugar levels.

### How can I lower my risk of Pancreatitis?

There are some things you can do to help lower your risk of getting Pancreatitis:

- Eat a healthy and balanced diet.
- Keep a healthy weight.
- Avoid too much alcohol.
- Quit smoking or avoid using tobacco.
- Stay active with regular exercise.
- See your GP or health worker for regular check-ups.



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