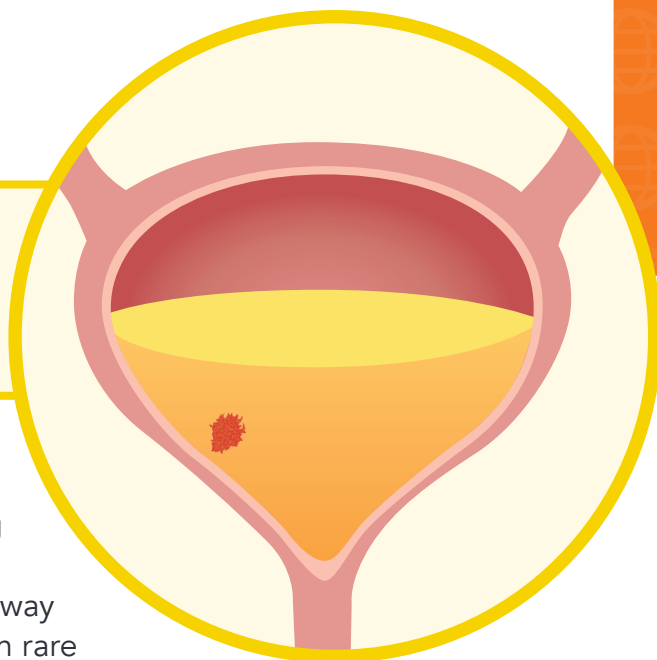


# What is Bladder Cancer?

Bladder cancer is a disease that develops in your bladder, the small pouch inside your lower belly that holds urine.



## How does it happen?

Inside our bodies, we have billions of tiny building blocks called cells. These cells usually follow a well-organised plan, growing and dividing in a controlled way to keep our bodies functioning correctly. However, on rare occasions, something disrupts this orderly process. Some cells can start growing too much, forming a lump known as a tumour. In the case of bladder cancer, the tumour generally begins in the lining of the bladder.

### Patient Pathway



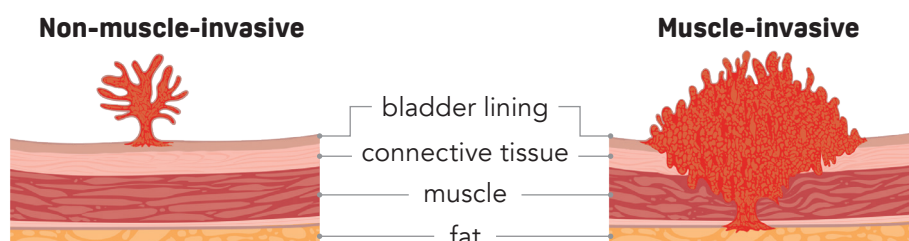
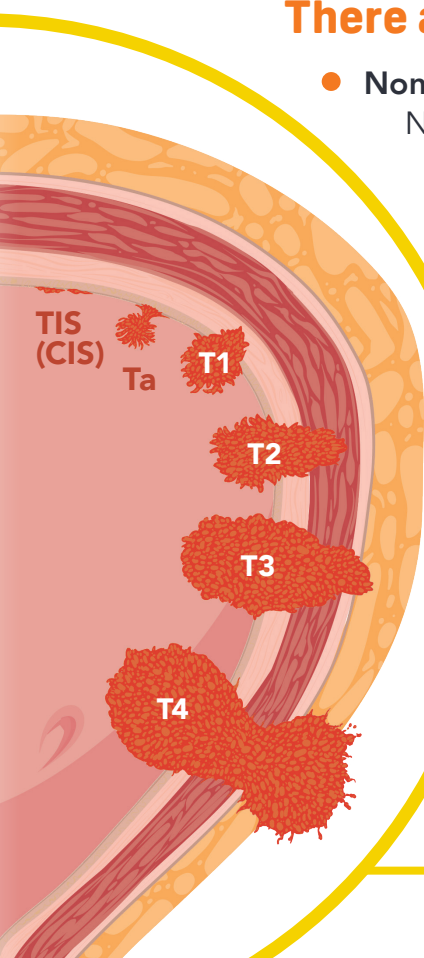
## There are two most common types of bladder cancer:

- **Non-muscle-invasive bladder cancer**

Non-muscle-invasive stages (**TIS/CIS**, **Ta**, **T1**) involve only the bladder's inner layers. Occurs when cancerous cells are contained in the lining of the bladder and have not invaded the muscle of the bladder wall. This is considered early stage and represents 70–75% of all diagnoses.

- **Muscle-invasive bladder cancer**

Muscle-invasive stages (**T2**, **T3**) indicate deeper spread into muscle and surrounding fat, with **T4** representing advanced cancer spread to other organs or parts of the body. Occurs when the cancer invades the muscle of the bladder wall. This represents the other 25–30% of diagnoses.



## What are the different types of treatments?



**In-bladder treatments** There are special treatments that focus on the cancer within your bladder.

One treatment is called BCG (Bacillus Calmette-Guérin) which involves introducing a weakened form of bacteria into the bladder to stimulate the body's immune system to fight the cancer cells.



**Whole-body treatments**

Sometimes, doctors give you special medicines to fight the cancer. These medicines go inside your body to attack the cancer cells and stop them from growing. They can be in the form of pills you swallow or liquids you receive through an IV (intravenous) tube.



**Surgery** In surgery for bladder cancer, the doctor removes the tumor during a procedure known as TURBT. If the cancer

is advanced, your doctor may recommend a Radical Cystectomy (bladder removal).



**Radiation** Think of radiation as using invisible rays to target and shrink the cancer. Radiation therapy is often used as an

alternative to surgery, or to help treat cancer that might be left behind after surgery.

**Remember, which treatment is right for you depends on the type and stage of bladder cancer you were diagnosed with. Your doctor will talk to you and your family to decide the best plan to help.**



## Getting support

Going through bladder cancer treatment and recovery can be challenging, but you don't have to go through it alone. There are many sources of support available to help you along the way.



**National patient organisations:**

In some countries, there are patient organisations dedicated to helping bladder cancer patients and their loved ones. They offer valuable resources, information, and support. You can find out more about bladder cancer patient organisations in your country by searching online or asking your doctor.



**Read patient stories available on our website:**

They can be very helpful when trying to make sense of other patients' diagnoses or bladder cancer experience and your own.



**Reach out to us:**

If you have questions, need information or resources about bladder cancer, you can reach out to us at [patients@worldbladdercancer.org](mailto:patients@worldbladdercancer.org). We're here to help "guide you to available information and support resources.

**Remember that seeking support can make a difference in your bladder cancer experience. Don't hesitate to reach out to these groups and organisations; they are there to support you every step of the way.**

[worldbladdercancer.org](http://worldbladdercancer.org)

Your doctor or nurse can help connect you with other patients on a similar journey, if there are no established bladder cancer support groups in your country.

If you feel ready to start your own, the **World Bladder Cancer Patient Coalition** has resources to support you on this journey.

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