

Allium Vegetable Consumption Reduces Risk of Stomach Cancer

Source: *Gastroenterology*

Gastric cancer, commonly referred to as stomach cancer, can develop in any part of the stomach and may spread throughout the stomach and to other organs; particularly the esophagus, lungs, lymph nodes, and the liver. Stomach cancer causes about 800,000 deaths worldwide per year. Stomach cancer is often asymptomatic or causes only nonspecific symptoms in its early stages. By the time symptoms occur, the cancer has often reached an advanced stage, one of the main reasons for its poor prognosis. Infection by *Helicobacter pylori* is believed to be the cause of most stomach cancer while autoimmune atrophic gastritis, intestinal metaplasia and various genetic factors are associated with increased risk levels.

A meta-analysis published in the journal *Gastroenterology* reviewed the effects of allium vegetables (onion, garlic, shallots, leeks, chives, etc) on the risk of stomach cancer. Researchers included 19 case-control and two cohort studies with a total of 543,220 subjects. It was found that those who consumed large amounts of allium vegetables appeared to reduce the risk of stomach cancer as compared to those with the lowest consumption. The equivalent of 1 garlic bulb or 20 grams per day of allium vegetables was associated with a 10 percent reduction in the risk of stomach cancer. These results suggest that further studies are necessary to determine whether this association can be replicated since potential confounding factors and exposure misclassification are possible flaws of the meta-analysis.¹

1 Zhou Y, Zhuang W, Hu W, et al. Consumption of Large Amounts of Allium Vegetables Reduces Risk for Gastric Cancer in a Meta-Analysis. *Gastroenterology*. Apr2011.