



GIST
CANCER
AWARENESS
FOUNDATION

Have you been
diagnosed with
GIST?

Do you know
what your treatment
options are?

Do you know what
actions to take
after diagnosis?

Do you feel alone?



What is GIST?

Gastrointestinal stromal tumor, GIST, is a relatively uncommon type of cancer that occurs in the gastrointestinal tract. GIST's belong to a class of diseases called sarcomas. Experts estimate that 4,500 to 6,000 GIST's are diagnosed each year in the United States. GIST's can develop anywhere in the GI tract but occur most often in the stomach (approximately 60%).

There are a few different mutations found in GIST with the primary mutations being KIT and PDGFRA. Approximately 10% of GIST cases do not have the mutation of KIT or PDGFRA and these are called “wild type” GIST.

For a majority of GIST's that have KIT or PDGFRA mutations, targeted drug therapy has been developed to help treat these cases. Gleevec (imatinib) and Sutent (sunitinib) are the primary drug options.

As for “wild type” GIST, a first line drug therapy is still being studied.

Surgery is still an important first option for the treatment of GIST's, especially for wild type cases.



Support

If you have been diagnosed with GIST, your first action is to join a Support Group.

Participation in a Support Group will create a tool for you that will provide valuable real life experiences for dealing with GIST.

The primary Support Group for the GIST community is GIST Support International:
WWW.GISTSUPPORT.ORG

GSI provides the most current information about GIST research and has a very active listerv that promotes discussion within the patient community on a daily basis.

Join a Support Group – it is your lifeline to the GIST community.





Action

Information you need about GIST will not fall into your lap.

You need to investigate and research GIST so that you can empower yourself with knowledge about this disease.

Using the internet is the key to unlock the doors holding the information that you need for education and guidance in finding medical providers, current events, and treatment options.

Empowerment removes the unknown about GIST and helps to reduce some fears about the diagnosis.



Education

Key websites for education:

National Cancer Institute

www.cancer.gov

National Institute of Health

www.nih.gov

NIH-Pediatric GIST

www.pediatricgist.cancer.gov

The Sarcoma Alliance

www.sarcoma.alliance.org

Sarcoma Foundation of America

www.curesarcoma.org



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