

Ironing out the link between *H. pylori* infection and gastric cancer

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H. pylori frequently causes gastric ulcers and is also one of the greatest risk factors for gastric cancer. *H. pylori* infection is also associated with another gastric cancer risk factor, iron deficiency.

In this issue of the [Journal of Clinical Investigation](#), researchers led by Richard Peek at Vanderbilt University investigated the influence of iron on *H. pylori*-induced gastric cancer. Peek and colleagues found that low iron accelerated the development of *H. pylori*-associated [cancerous lesions](#) in gerbils.

Further, *H. pylori* strains isolated from a human population at high risk for gastric cancer were more virulent and produced greater inflammation if they came from patients with low iron levels.

In an accompanying article, El-Omar Emad of Aberdeen University discusses how iron levels could be used to identify patients that are at a higher risk for gastric cancer after *H. pylori* infection.

More information: Iron deficiency accelerates Helicobacter pylori-induced carcinogenesis in rodents and humans, *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, 2012.

Iron deficiency and *H. pylori*-induced gastric cancer: too little, too bad, *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, 2012.

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