

Staging is the process the doctor uses to determine the extent of the cancer in the body. After a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer has been made, additional imaging tests and surgery may be required to accurately determine the stage. Knowing the correct stage helps the doctor determine the prognosis and best course of treatment.

There are two ways to describe stages of pancreatic cancer: by stage number or by surgical resection category. The stage number indicates the size and location of the cancer. The surgical resection category indicates whether or not the tumor can be surgically removed. Both are determined by the size and location of the primary tumor, the involvement of local lymph nodes and blood vessels and the presence of distant metastases. Metastases are tumors that have spread to other parts of the body. The doctor may use one or both methods to describe the stage. The following chart details each stage.

Stage Number	Description	Extent of the Tumor	Surgical Resection Category
Stage IA	Tumor limited to the pancreas and measures 2 centimeters (cm) or less at largest point	Localized	Resectable
Stage IB	Tumor limited to the pancreas and measures greater than 2 cm	Localized	Resectable
Stage IIA	Tumor extends directly beyond the pancreas but does not involve the major local arteries (celiac axis and superior mesenteric artery) or local lymph nodes	Locally Advanced	Resectable or Borderline Resectable
Stage IIB	Tumor may or may not extend beyond the pancreas but does not involve the major local arteries. Local lymph nodes are involved	Locally Advanced	Resectable or Borderline Resectable
Stage III	Tumor involves major local arteries. Local lymph nodes may or may not be involved	Locally Advanced	Unresectable
Stage IV	Primary tumor may be any size. Disease has metastasized (spread) to another part of the body, including the liver, abdominal wall, lungs and/or distant lymph nodes	Metastatic	Unresectable