

# Stomach

**Protocol applies to all invasive carcinomas of the stomach.**

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*Protocol revision date: January 2005  
Based on AJCC/UICC TNM, 6<sup>th</sup> edition*

## **Procedures**

- **Cytology** (No Accompanying Checklist)
- **Incisional Biopsy (Endoscopic or Other)**
- **Excisional Biopsy (Polypectomy)**
- **Local Resection**
- **Gastrectomy (Partial or Complete)**

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The College of American Pathologists offers these protocols to assist pathologists in providing clinically useful and relevant information when reporting results of surgical specimen examinations of surgical specimens. The College regards the reporting elements in the "Surgical Pathology Cancer Case Summary (Checklist)" portion of the protocols as essential elements of the pathology report. However, the manner in which these elements are reported is at the discretion of each specific pathologist, taking into account clinician preferences, institutional policies, and individual practice.

The College developed these protocols as an educational tool to assist pathologists in the useful reporting of relevant information. It did not issue the protocols for use in litigation, reimbursement, or other contexts. Nevertheless, the College recognizes that the protocols might be used by hospitals, attorneys, payers, and others. Indeed, effective January 1, 2004, the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons mandated the use of the checklist elements of the protocols as part of its Cancer Program Standards for Approved Cancer Programs. Therefore, it becomes even more important for pathologists to familiarize themselves with the document. At the same time, the College cautions that use of the protocols other than for their intended educational purpose may involve additional considerations that are beyond the scope of this document.

## **Summary of Changes to Checklist(s)**

*Protocol revision date: January 2005*

No changes have been made to the data elements of the checklist(s) since the January 2004 protocol revision.

**Surgical Pathology Cancer Case Summary (Checklist)**

*Protocol revision date: January 2005  
Applies to invasive carcinomas only  
Based on AJCC/UICC TNM, 6<sup>th</sup> edition*

**\*STOMACH: Biopsy**

**(Note: Use of checklist for biopsy specimens is optional)**

\*Patient name:

\*Surgical pathology number:

<b>Note: Check 1 response unless otherwise indicated.</b>
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**\*MACROSCOPIC****\*Specimen Type**

\*  Incisional biopsy

\*  Excisional biopsy (polypectomy)

\*  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

\*  Not specified

**\*Tumor Site**

\*Specify, if known: \_\_\_\_\_

\*  Not specified

**\*MICROSCOPIC****\*Histologic Type**

\*  Adenocarcinoma, intestinal type

\*  Adenocarcinoma, diffuse type

\*  Papillary adenocarcinoma

\*  Tubular adenocarcinoma

\*  Mucinous adenocarcinoma (greater than 50% mucinous)

\*  Signet-ring cell carcinoma (greater than 50% signet-ring cells)

\*  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

\*  Carcinoma, type cannot be determined

**\*Histologic Grade**

- \*  Not applicable
- \*  GX: Cannot be assessed
- \*  G1: Well differentiated
- \*  G2: Moderately differentiated
- \*  G3: Poorly differentiated
- \*  G4: Undifferentiated
- \*  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Extent of Invasion (deepest)**

- \*  Cannot be determined
- \*  Lamina propria
- \*  Muscularis mucosae
- \*  Submucosa
- \*  Muscularis propria

**\*Margins (polypectomy only; check all that apply)**

- \*  Not applicable

\*Mucosal Margin

- \*  Cannot be assessed
- \*  Uninvolved by invasive carcinoma
- \*  Involved by invasive carcinoma
- \*  Involved by adenoma

\*Deep Margin

- \*  Cannot be assessed
- \*  Uninvolved by invasive carcinoma
- \*Distance of invasive carcinoma from margin: \_\_\_\_ mm
- \*  Involved by invasive carcinoma

**\*Additional Pathologic Findings (check all that apply)**

- \*  None identified
- \*  Intestinal metaplasia
- \*  Dysplasia
- \*  Gastritis (type): \_\_\_\_\_
- \*  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Comment(s)**

\* Data elements **with asterisks** are **not required** for accreditation purposes for the Commission on Cancer. These elements may be clinically important, but are not yet validated or regularly used in patient management. Alternatively, the necessary data may not be available to the pathologist at the time of pathologic assessment of this specimen.

**Surgical Pathology Cancer Case Summary (Checklist)**

*Protocol revision date: January 2005  
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**STOMACH: Resection**

Patient name:

Surgical pathology number:

<b>Note: Check 1 response unless otherwise indicated.</b>
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**MACROSCOPIC****Specimen Type**

- Partial gastrectomy  
 Partial gastrectomy, proximal  
 Partial gastrectomy, distal  
 Partial gastrectomy, other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total gastrectomy  
 Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Not specified

**Tumor Site (check all that apply)**

- Cardia  
 Fundus  
     \*  Anterior wall  
     \*  Posterior wall  
 Body  
     \*  Anterior wall  
     \*  Posterior wall  
     \*  Lesser curvature  
     \*  Greater curvature  
 Antrum  
     \*  Anterior wall  
     \*  Posterior wall  
     \*  Lesser curvature  
     \*  Greater curvature  
 Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Not specified

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**\*Tumor Configuration**

- \*  Exophytic (polypoid)
- \*  Infiltrative
- \*  Diffusely infiltrative (linitis plastica)
- \*  Expansile (noninfiltrative)
- \*  Ulcerating
- \*  Annular

**Tumor Size**

- Greatest dimension: \_\_\_ cm  
 \*Additional dimensions: \_\_\_ x \_\_\_ cm  
 \_\_\_ Cannot be determined (see Comment)

**MICROSCOPIC****Histologic Type**

- \_\_\_ Adenocarcinoma, intestinal type
- \_\_\_ Adenocarcinoma, diffuse type
- \_\_\_ Papillary adenocarcinoma
- \_\_\_ Tubular adenocarcinoma
- \_\_\_ Mucinous adenocarcinoma (greater than 50% mucinous)
- \_\_\_ Signet-ring cell carcinoma (greater than 50% signet-ring cells)
- \_\_\_ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Carcinoma, type cannot be determined

**Histologic Grade**

- \_\_\_ Not applicable
- \_\_\_ GX: Cannot be assessed
- \_\_\_ G1: Well differentiated
- \_\_\_ G2: Moderately differentiated
- \_\_\_ G3: Poorly differentiated
- \_\_\_ G4: Undifferentiated
- \_\_\_ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Pathologic Staging (pTNM)**Primary Tumor (pT)

- \_\_\_ pTX: Cannot be assessed
- \_\_\_ pT0: No evidence of primary tumor
- \_\_\_ pTis: Carcinoma in situ
- pT1: Tumor invades lamina propria or submucosa
  - \_\_\_ pT1a: Tumor invades lamina propria
  - \_\_\_ pT1b: Tumor invades submucosa
- pT2: Tumor invades muscularis propria or subserosa
  - \_\_\_ pT2a: Tumor invades muscularis propria
  - \_\_\_ pT2b: Tumor invades subserosa
- \_\_\_ pT3: Tumor penetrates serosa (visceral peritoneum) without invasion of adjacent structures
- \_\_\_ pT4: Tumor directly invades adjacent structures

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Regional Lymph Nodes (pN)

- pNX: Cannot be assessed
- pN0: No regional lymph node metastasis
- pN1: Metastasis in 1 to 6 perigastric lymph nodes
- pN2: Metastasis in 7 to 15 perigastric lymph nodes
- pN3: Metastasis in greater than 15 perigastric lymph nodes
- Specify: Number examined:
- Number involved:

Distant Metastasis (pM)

- pMX: Cannot be assessed
- pM1: Distant metastasis
- \*Specify site(s), if known: \_\_\_\_\_

**Margins (check all that apply)**

Proximal Margin

- Cannot be assessed
- Uninvolved by invasive carcinoma
- Involved by invasive carcinoma
- Carcinoma in situ/adenoma absent at proximal margin
- Carcinoma in situ/adenoma present at proximal margin

Distal Margin

- Cannot be assessed
- Uninvolved by invasive carcinoma
- Involved by invasive carcinoma
- Carcinoma in situ/adenoma absent at distal margin
- Carcinoma in situ/adenoma present at distal margin

Omental (Radial) Margins

- Cannot be assessed
- Uninvolved by invasive carcinoma
- Lesser omental margin involved by invasive carcinoma
- Greater omental margin involved by invasive carcinoma

If all margins uninvolved by invasive carcinoma:

Distance of invasive carcinoma from closest margin:  mm

Specify margin: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Lymphatic (Small Vessel) Invasion (L)**

- \*  Absent
- \*  Present
- \*  Indeterminate

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**\*Venous (Large Vessel) Invasion (V)**

- \*  Absent
- \*  Present
- \*  Indeterminate

**\*Perineural Invasion**

- \*  Absent
- \*  Present

**\*Additional Pathologic Findings (check all that apply)**

- \*  None identified
- \*  Intestinal metaplasia
- \*  Dysplasia
- \*  Gastritis (type): \_\_\_\_\_
- \*  Polyp(s) (type[s]): \_\_\_\_\_
- \*  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Comment(s)**

\* Data elements **with asterisks** are **not required** for accreditation purposes for the Commission on Cancer. These elements may be clinically important, but are not yet validated or regularly used in patient management. Alternatively, the necessary data may not be available to the pathologist at the time of pathologic assessment of this specimen.

## Background Documentation

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Protocol revision date: January 2005

### I. Cytologic Material

#### A. Clinical Information

1. Patient identification
  - a. Name
  - b. Identification number
  - c. Age (birth date)
  - d. Sex
2. Responsible physician(s)
3. Date of procedure
4. Other clinical information
  - a. Relevant history
    - (1) previous diagnoses and treatment for gastric cancer
    - (2) previous Billroth procedure
    - (3) *Helicobacter pylori* gastritis
    - (4) atrophic gastritis
  - b. Relevant findings (eg, endoscopic/imaging studies)
  - c. Clinical diagnosis
  - d. Procedure (eg, brushing, washing, other)
  - e. Anatomic site(s) of specimen(s)

#### B. Macroscopic Examination

1. Specimen
  - a. Unfixed/fixed (specify fixative)
  - b. Number of slides received, if appropriate
  - c. Quantity and appearance of fluid specimen, if appropriate
  - d. Other (eg, cytologic preparation from tissue)
  - e. Results of intraprocedural consultation
2. Material submitted for microscopic evaluation
3. Special studies (specify) (eg, cytochemistry, immunocytochemistry, DNA analysis [specify type], cytogenetic analysis)

#### C. Microscopic Evaluation

1. Adequacy of specimen (if unsatisfactory for evaluation, specify reason)
2. Tumor, if present
  - a. Histologic type, if possible (Note **A**)
  - b. Histologic grade, if possible (Note **B**)
  - c. Other characteristics (eg, nuclear grade/necrosis)
3. Additional pathologic findings, if present
4. Results/status of special studies (specify)
5. Comments
  - a. Correlation with intraprocedural consultation, as appropriate
  - b. Correlation with other specimens, as appropriate
  - c. Correlation with clinical information, as appropriate

## II. Incisional Biopsy (Endoscopic or Other)

### A. Clinical Information

1. Patient identification
  - a. Name
  - b. Identification number
  - c. Age (birth date)
  - d. Sex
2. Responsible physician(s)
3. Date of procedure
4. Other clinical information
  - a. Relevant history
    - (1) previous diagnoses and treatment for gastric cancer
    - (2) previous Billroth procedure
    - (3) *Helicobacter pylori* gastritis
    - (4) atrophic gastritis
  - b. Relevant findings (eg, endoscopic/imaging studies)
  - c. Clinical diagnosis
  - d. Procedure (eg, endoscopic biopsy)
  - e. Operative findings
  - f. Anatomic site(s) of specimen(s)

### B. Macroscopic Examination

1. Specimen
  - a. Unfixed/fixed (specify fixative)
  - b. Number of pieces
  - c. Largest dimension of each piece
  - d. Results of intraoperative consultation
2. Tissues submitted for microscopic evaluation
  - a. Submit entire specimen
  - b. Frozen section tissue fragment(s) (unless saved for special studies)
3. Special studies (specify) (eg, histochemistry, immunohistochemistry, morphometry, DNA analysis [specify type], cytogenetic analysis)

### C. Microscopic Evaluation

1. Tumor
  - a. Histologic type (Note **A**)
  - b. Histologic grade (Note **B**)
  - c. Extent of invasion
  - d. Venous/lymphatic vessel invasion
2. Additional pathologic findings, if present
  - a. Dysplasia
  - b. Metaplasia
  - c. Atrophy
  - d. Gastritis
  - e. *Helicobacter pylori*
  - f. Other(s)
3. Results of special studies (specify)
4. Comments
  - a. Correlation with intraoperative consultation, as appropriate
  - b. Correlation with other specimens, as appropriate
  - c. Correlation with clinical information, as appropriate

### III. Excisional Biopsy

#### (Local Excision or Polypectomy)

##### A. Clinical Information

1. Patient identification
  - a. Name
  - b. Identification number
  - c. Age (birth date)
  - d. Sex
2. Responsible physician(s)
3. Date of procedure
4. Other clinical information
  - a. Relevant history
    - (1) previous diagnoses and treatment for gastric cancer
    - (2) previous Billroth procedure
    - (3) *Helicobacter pylori* gastritis
    - (4) atrophic gastritis
  - b. Relevant findings (eg, endoscopic/imaging studies)
  - c. Clinical diagnosis
  - d. Procedure (eg, polypectomy)
  - e. Operative findings
  - f. Anatomic site(s) of specimen(s)

##### B. Macroscopic Examination

1. Specimen
  - a. Unfixed/fixed (specify fixative)
  - b. Number of pieces
  - c. Descriptive features (eg, color, consistency)
  - d. Dimensions
  - e. Layers of stomach present, if grossly discernible
  - f. Orientation, if indicated by surgeon
  - g. Results of intraoperative consultation
2. Tumor
  - a. Configuration, if appropriate (Note **C**)
  - b. Dimensions (3) (Note **D**)
  - c. Distance from closest margin
  - d. Estimated depth of invasion (Note **E**)
3. Lesions in noncancerous stomach, if appropriate (eg, ulcers, polyps, other)
4. Tissue(s) submitted for microscopic evaluation
  - a. Carcinoma, including
    - (1) point of deepest penetration
    - (2) interface with adjacent stomach
    - (3) margin closest to tumor edge
    - (4) (if a polyp) apex and stalk in same section, if possible
  - b. Frozen section tissue fragment(s) (unless saved for special studies)
5. Special studies (specify) (eg, histochemistry, immunohistochemistry, morphometry, DNA analysis [specify type], cytogenetic analysis)

##### C. Microscopic Evaluation

1. Tumor
  - a. Histologic type (Note **A**)
  - b. Histologic grade (Note **B**)
  - c. Extent of invasion (Note **E**)
  - d. Venous/lymphatic vessel invasion (Note **F**)
  - e. Perineural invasion (Note **G**)

2. Carcinoma in a polyp
  - a. Specify histologic type of polyp
  - b. Specify presence/absence of invasion of:
    - (1) muscularis mucosae/submucosa of polyp head
    - (2) submucosa at base
    - (3) venous/lymphatic vessels (Note F)
3. Margins
  - a. Distance from closest mucosal margin and deep margin
  - b. Presence of metaplasia/dysplasia/adenoma
4. Additional pathologic findings, if present
  - a. Dysplasia
  - b. Metaplasia
  - c. Atrophy
  - d. Gastritis
  - e. *Helicobacter pylori*
  - f. Other(s)
5. Results/status of special studies (specify)
6. Comments
  - a. Correlation with intraoperative consultation, as appropriate
  - b. Correlation with other specimens, as appropriate
  - c. Correlation with clinical information, as appropriate

#### IV. Gastric Resection

##### A. Clinical Information

1. Patient identification
  - a. Name
  - b. Identification number
  - c. Age (birth date)
  - d. Sex
2. Responsible physician(s)
3. Date of procedure
4. Other clinical information
  - a. Relevant history
    - (1) previous diagnoses and treatment for gastric cancer
    - (2) previous Billroth procedure
    - (3) *Helicobacter pylori* gastritis
    - (4) atrophic gastritis
  - b. Relevant findings (eg, endoscopic/imaging studies)
  - c. Clinical diagnosis
  - d. Procedure (eg, subtotal gastrectomy, total gastrectomy, other)
  - e. Operative findings
  - f. Anatomic site(s) of specimen(s)

##### B. Macroscopic Examination

1. Specimen
  - a. Organ(s)/tissue(s) included
  - b. Unfixed/fixed (specify fixative)
  - c. Open/unopened
  - d. Number of pieces
  - e. Dimensions (Note H)
  - f. Length of attached esophagus/duodenum
  - g. Orientation, if indicated by surgeon
  - h. Results of intraoperative consultation

2. Tumor
  - a. Location (Note **I**)
  - b. Configuration (Note **C**)
  - c. Dimensions (3) (Note **D**)
  - d. Descriptive features (eg, color, consistency)
  - e. Ulceration/perforation
  - f. Distance from margins (Note **J**)
    - (1) proximal
    - (2) distal
    - (3) radial (soft tissue and/or mesenteric margin(s) closest to deepest tumor penetration)
  - g. Estimated depth of invasion (Note **E**)
3. Lesions in noncancerous stomach
  - a. Ulcers
  - b. Polyps
  - c. Other(s)
4. Regional lymph nodes (Notes **E** and **K**)
5. Metastasis to other organ(s) or structure(s) (Notes **E** and **K**)
6. Tissues submitted for microscopic evaluation
  - a. Carcinoma, including
    - (1) point of deepest penetration
    - (2) interface with adjacent stomach
    - (3) visceral serosa overlying tumor
  - b. Margins (Note **G**)
    - (1) proximal
    - (2) distal
    - (3) radial (soft tissue and/or mesenteric margin(s) closest to deepest tumor penetration)
  - c. All lymph nodes (Notes **E** and **K**)
    - (1) specify node(s) when labeled by surgeon
  - d. Other lesions (eg, polyps/ulcers)
  - e. Stomach uninvolved by tumor
  - f. Other tissue(s)/organ(s)
  - g. Frozen section tissue fragments (unless saved for special studies)
7. Special studies (specify) (eg, histochemistry, immunohistochemistry, morphometry, DNA analysis [specify type], cytogenetic analysis)

**C. Microscopic Evaluation**

1. Tumor
  - a. Histologic type (Note **A**)
  - b. Histologic grade (Note **B**)
  - c. Extent of invasion (Note **E**)
  - d. Extension into esophagus or duodenum
  - e. Venous/lymphatic vessel invasion (Note **F**)
  - f. Perineural invasion (Note **G**)
2. Additional pathologic findings, if present
  - a. Chronic gastritis (type)
  - b. Intestinal metaplasia
  - c. Dysplasia
  - d. Atrophy
  - e. Adenoma
  - f. Other types of polyps
  - g. *Helicobacter pylori*
  - h. Other

3. Margins (Note J)
  - a. Proximal
  - b. Distal
  - c. Radial
4. Regional lymph nodes (Note K)
  - a. Number
  - b. Number involved by tumor
5. Distant metastasis (specify site[s]) (Note K)
6. Other tissue(s)/organ(s)
7. Results/status of special studies (specify)
8. Comments
  - a. Correlation with intraoperative consultation, as appropriate
  - b. Correlation with other specimens, as appropriate
  - c. Correlation with clinical information, as appropriate

## Explanatory Notes

### A. Histologic Type

For consistency in reporting, the histologic classification proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO) is recommended.<sup>1</sup> However, this protocol does not preclude the use of other systems of classification or histologic types, such as the Laurén classification,<sup>2</sup> which may be used in addition to the WHO system.

With the exception of the rare small cell carcinoma of the stomach, which has an unfavorable prognosis, most multivariate analyses show no effect of tumor type, independent of stage, on prognosis.<sup>3</sup>

### WHO Classification of Carcinoma of the Stomach

Adenocarcinoma

Intestinal type

Diffuse type

Papillary adenocarcinoma<sup>#</sup>

Tubular adenocarcinoma<sup>#</sup>

Mucinous adenocarcinoma (greater than 50% mucinous)

Signet-ring cell carcinoma<sup>#</sup> (greater than 50% signet-ring cells)

Adenosquamous carcinoma

Squamous cell carcinoma

Small cell carcinoma<sup>#</sup>

Undifferentiated carcinoma<sup>#</sup>

Other (specify)

<sup>#</sup> Not usually graded (see below).

The Laurén classification, namely intestinal or diffuse type, and/or the Ming classification, namely expanding or infiltrating type, may also be included. The WHO classifies in situ carcinoma as intraepithelial neoplasia. The term “carcinoma, NOS (not otherwise specified)” is not part of the WHO classification.

**B. Histologic Grade**

For adenocarcinomas, a histologic grade is based on the extent of glandular differentiation is suggested as shown below.

Grade X	Cannot be assessed
Grade 1	Well differentiated (greater than 95% of tumor composed of glands)
Grade 2	Moderately differentiated (50% to 95% of tumor composed of glands)
Grade 3	Poorly differentiated (49% or less of tumor composed of glands)

Tubular adenocarcinomas are not typically graded but are low-grade and would correspond to grade 1.

Signet-ring cell carcinomas are not typically graded but are high-grade and would correspond to grade 3.

Small cell carcinomas and undifferentiated carcinomas are not typically graded but are high-grade tumors and would correspond to grade 4.

For squamous cell carcinomas (rare), a suggested histologic grading system is shown below.

Grade X	Grade cannot be assessed
Grade 1	Well differentiated
Grade 2	Moderately differentiated
Grade 3	Poorly differentiated

Note: Undifferentiated tumors cannot be specifically categorized as adenocarcinoma or squamous cell carcinoma. Instead, they are classified as undifferentiated carcinoma by the WHO classification and may be assigned grade 4 (see Note **A**).

For all stage groupings, grading correlates with outcome.<sup>4,5</sup>

**C. Configuration**

Macroscopic configuration types as described by Borrmann include polypoid (Borrmann type I), ulcerating (Borrmann type II), ulcerating and infiltrating (Borrmann type III), and diffusely infiltrating (Borrmann type IV or linitis plastica). Tumor configuration has been shown to have prognostic significance in several large studies.<sup>3</sup> Specifically, polypoid and ulcerating cancers (Borrmann types I and II) have a better prognosis than infiltrating cancer (Borrmann types III and IV). However, the prognostic value of tumor configuration is controversial since numerous smaller studies have failed to demonstrate independent prognostic significance for this pathologic feature.

**D. Tumor Size**

Although not a factor in the T classification of gastric carcinoma (see Note **E**), tumor size has been shown to be an independent adverse prognostic factor in many studies.<sup>3</sup> However, the prognostic value of tumor size is controversial since a large number of other studies have failed to demonstrate independent prognostic significance for this pathologic feature.

**E. TNM and Stage Groupings**

The TNM staging system for gastric carcinoma of the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) and the International Union Against Cancer (UICC) is recommended and shown below.<sup>6,7</sup>

By AJCC/UICC convention, the designation “T” refers to a primary tumor that has not been previously treated. The symbol “p” refers to the pathologic classification of the TNM, as opposed to the clinical classification, and is based on gross and microscopic examination. pT entails a resection of the primary tumor or biopsy adequate to evaluate the highest pT category, pN entails removal of nodes adequate to validate lymph node metastasis, and pM implies microscopic examination of distant lesions. Clinical classification (cTNM) is usually carried out by the referring physician before treatment during initial evaluation of the patient or when pathologic classification is not possible.

Pathologic staging is usually performed after surgical resection of the primary tumor. Pathologic staging depends on pathologic documentation of the anatomic extent of disease, whether or not the primary tumor has been completely removed. If a biopsied tumor is not resected for any reason (eg, when technically unfeasible) and if the highest T and N categories or the M1 category of the tumor can be confirmed microscopically, the criteria for pathologic classification and staging have been satisfied without total removal of the primary cancer.

**Primary Tumor (T)**

- TX Primary tumor cannot be assessed
- T0 No evidence of primary tumor
- Tis Carcinoma in situ: intraepithelial tumor without invasion of the lamina propria
- T1 Tumor invades lamina propria or submucosa
- T1a Tumor invades lamina propria<sup>#</sup>
- T1b Tumor invades submucosa<sup>#</sup>
- T2 Tumor invades muscularis propria or subserosa<sup>##</sup>
- T2a Tumor invades muscularis propria
- T2b Tumor invades subserosa
- T3 Tumor penetrates serosa (visceral peritoneum) without invasion of adjacent structures<sup>###</sup>
- T4 Tumor directly invades adjacent structures<sup>^</sup>

<sup>#</sup> An optional expansion of T1 is proposed by the UICC based on the observed difference in frequency of lymph node metastasis. In addition, the substratifications may be important as indicators for treatment by limited procedures.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>##</sup> Separation of T2 into T2a and T2b is justified because postsurgical survival following resection for cure has been shown to be significantly different for T2a and T2b (see below).<sup>8</sup>

	<b>2-Year Survival Rate</b>	<b>5-Year Survival Rate</b>	<b>Median Survival Rate (Months)</b>
pT2a	74%	62%	119
pT2b	57%	40%	36

<sup>###</sup> A tumor may penetrate the muscularis propria with extension into the gastrocolic or gastrohepatic ligaments or into the greater or lesser omentum without perforation of the visceral peritoneum covering these structures. In this case the tumor would be classified as T2. If there is perforation of the visceral peritoneum covering the gastric ligaments or omenta, the tumor is classified as T3.

<sup>^</sup> The adjacent structures of the stomach are the spleen, transverse colon, liver, diaphragm, pancreas, abdominal wall, adrenal gland, kidney, small intestine, and

retroperitoneum. Intramural extension into the duodenum or esophagus is classified by the depth of greatest invasion in any of these sites, including the stomach.

**Regional Lymph Nodes (N)** (also see Note K)

- NX Regional lymph nodes cannot be assessed
- N0 No regional lymph node metastasis<sup>#</sup>
- N1 Metastasis in 1 to 6 perigastric lymph nodes
- N2 Metastasis in 7 to 15 perigastric lymph nodes
- N3 Metastasis in more than 15 lymph nodes

<sup>#</sup> A designation of N0 should be used if all examined lymph nodes are negative, regardless of the total number removed and examined.<sup>6</sup>

Regional Lymph Nodes (pN0): Isolated Tumor Cells

Isolated tumor cells (ITCs) are single cells or small clusters of cells not more than 0.2 mm in greatest dimension. Lymph nodes or distant sites with ITCs found by either histologic examination, immunohistochemistry, or nonmorphologic techniques (eg, flow cytometry, DNA analysis, polymerase chain reaction [PCR] amplification of a specific tumor marker) should be classified as N0 or M0, respectively. Specific denotation of the assigned N category is suggested as follows for cases in which ITCs are the only evidence of possible metastatic disease.<sup>8,9</sup>

- pN0 No regional lymph node metastasis histologically, no examination for isolated tumor cells (ITCs)
- pN0(i-) No regional lymph node metastasis histologically, negative morphologic (any morphologic technique, including hematoxylin-eosin and immunohistochemistry) findings for ITCs
- pN0(i+) No regional lymph node metastasis histologically, positive morphologic (any morphologic technique, including hematoxylin-eosin and immunohistochemistry) findings for ITCs
- pN0(mol-) No regional lymph node metastasis histologically, negative nonmorphologic (molecular) findings for ITCs
- pN0(mol+) No regional lymph node metastasis histologically, positive nonmorphologic (molecular) findings for ITCs

**Distant Metastasis (M)**

- MX Presence of distant metastasis cannot be assessed
- M0 No distant metastasis
- M1 Distant metastasis

**Stage Groupings**

Stage 0	Tis	N0	M0
Stage IA	T1	N0	M0
Stage 1B	T1	N1	M0
	T2a/b	N0	M0
Stage II	T1	N2	M0
	T2a/b	N1	M0
	T3	N0	M0
Stage IIIA	T2a/b	N2	M0
	T3	N1	M0
	T4	N0	M0
Stage IIIB	T3	N2	M0
Stage IV	T4	N1-3	M0
	T1-3	N3	M0
	Any T	Any N	M1

**TNM Descriptors**

For identification of special cases of TNM or pTNM classifications, the “m” suffix and “y,” “r,” and “a” prefixes are used. Although they do not affect the stage grouping, they indicate cases needing separate analysis.

The “m” suffix indicates the presence of multiple primary tumors in a single site and is recorded in parentheses: pT(m)NM.

The “y” prefix indicates those cases in which classification is performed during or following initial multimodality therapy (ie, neoadjuvant chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or both chemotherapy and radiation therapy). The cTNM or pTNM category is identified by a “y” prefix. The ycTNM or ypTNM categorizes the extent of tumor actually present at the time of that examination. The “y” categorization is not an estimate of tumor prior to multimodality therapy (ie, before initiation of neoadjuvant therapy).

The “r” prefix indicates a recurrent tumor when staged after a documented disease-free interval, and is identified by the “r” prefix: rTNM.

The “a” prefix designates the stage determined at autopsy: aTNM.

**Additional Descriptors****Residual Tumor (R)**

Tumor remaining in a patient after therapy with curative intent (eg, surgical resection for cure) is categorized by a system known as R classification, shown below.<sup>10</sup>

RX	Presence of residual tumor cannot be assessed
R0	No residual tumor
R1	Microscopic residual tumor
R2	Macroscopic residual tumor

For the surgeon, the R classification may be useful to indicate the known or assumed status of the completeness of a surgical excision. For the pathologist, the R classification is relevant to the status of the margins of a surgical resection specimen. That is, tumor involving the resection margin on pathologic examination may be assumed to correspond to residual tumor in the patient and may be classified as macroscopic or microscopic according to the findings at the specimen margin(s).

**Vessel Invasion**

By AJCC/UICC convention, vessel invasion (lymphatic or venous) does not affect the T category indicating local extent of tumor unless specifically included in the definition of a T category. In all other cases, lymphatic and venous invasion by tumor are coded separately as follows.

Lymphatic Vessel Invasion (L)

LX	Lymphatic vessel invasion cannot be assessed
L0	No lymphatic vessel invasion
L1	Lymphatic vessel invasion

Venous Invasion (V)

VX	Venous invasion cannot be assessed
V0	No venous invasion
V1	Microscopic venous invasion
V2	Macroscopic venous invasion

**F. Venous/Lymphatic Vessel Invasion**

Both venous and lymphatic vessel invasion have been shown to be adverse prognostic factors.<sup>3,11</sup> However, the microscopic presence of tumor in lymphatic vessels or veins does not qualify as local extension of tumor as defined by the T classification. It is codified by L1 or V1, respectively.<sup>6</sup>

**G. Perineural Invasion**

Perineural invasion has been shown to be an adverse prognostic factor.<sup>3</sup>

**H. Specimen Dimensions**

Open specimen along greater curvature, avoiding tumor if located in this position. Measure length of stomach along lesser curvature and circumference of distal margin. Measure length and width of tubular esophagus.

**I. Tumor Location**

Tumor location should be described in relation to the following landmarks:

- gastric region: cardia (including gastroesophageal junction), fundus, corpus, antrum, pylorus
- greater curvature, lesser curvature
- anterior wall, posterior wall

For tumors involving the gastroesophageal junction, specific observations should be recorded in an attempt to establish the exact site of origin of the tumor. The gastroesophageal junction is defined as the junction of the tubular esophagus and the stomach irrespective of the type of epithelial lining of the esophagus. The pathologist should record the:

- (1) proportion of tumor mass located in the esophagus and stomach
- (2) greatest dimensions of esophageal and gastric portions of the tumor
- (3) anatomic location of the center of the tumor

If more than 50% of the tumor involves the esophagus, the tumor is classified as esophageal. If more than 50% of the tumor involves the stomach, the tumor is classified as gastric.<sup>10</sup> If the tumor is equally located above and below the gastroesophageal junction and/or is designated as being at the junction (anatomic center of the tumor), carcinomas of the squamous, small cell, and undifferentiated types are classified as

esophageal, whereas adenocarcinomas and signet-ring cell carcinomas are classified as gastric.<sup>8</sup>

Tumor site has been shown to be an independent prognostic factor in gastric carcinoma. The long-term prognosis for patients with proximal carcinomas (ie, tumors of the upper third of the stomach, including the gastric cardia and gastroesophageal junction) is poorer than for those with distal cancers.<sup>3</sup>

### J. Margins

Margins include the proximal, distal, and radial margins. The radial margins represent the non-peritonealized soft tissue margins closest to the deepest penetration of tumor. In the stomach, the lesser omental (hepatoduodenal and hepatogastric ligaments) and greater omental resection margins are the only radial margins. It may be helpful to mark the margin(s) closest to the tumor with ink. Margins marked by ink should be designated in the macroscopic description.

### K. Regional Lymph Nodes

The specific nodal areas of the stomach are listed below.<sup>6</sup>

#### Greater Curvature of Stomach

Greater curvature, greater omental, gastroduodenal, gastroepiploic, pyloric, and pancreaticoduodenal

#### Pancreatic and Splenic Area

Pancreaticocolic, peripancreatic, splenic

#### Lesser Curvature of Stomach

Lesser curvature, lesser omental, left gastric, cardioesophageal, common hepatic, celiac, and hepatoduodenal

Involvement of other intra-abdominal lymph nodes, such as hepatoduodenal, retropancreatic, mesenteric, and para-aortic, is classified as distant metastasis.<sup>6</sup>

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