

Gallstones

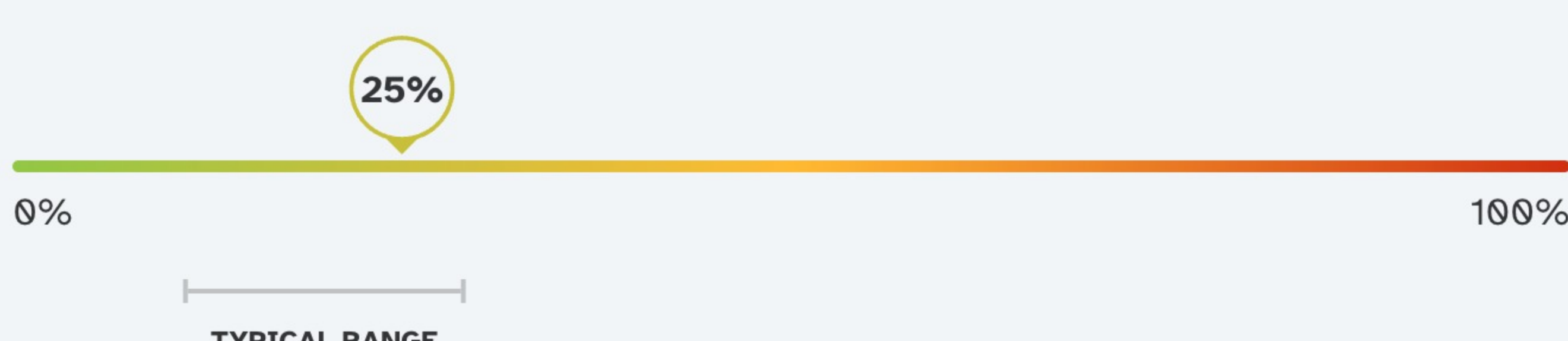
POWERED BY 23ANDME RESEARCH

Gallstones are solid, pebble-like masses that form in the gallbladder. Most gallstones do not cause symptoms, but if a gallstone blocks the gallbladder outlet or becomes stuck in the ducts connecting the gallbladder to the small intestine, it can cause severe pain and inflammation that may require surgery.



Jamie, your genetic result is associated with a **typical likelihood** of developing gallstones.

An estimated **25%** of people with genetics and other factors like yours develop gallstones by **their 70s**. This is based on data from female 23andMe research participants of European descent.



This estimate is based on currently available data and may be updated over time.

Ways to take action

Your overall likelihood of developing gallstones also depends on other factors, including lifestyle. Experts agree that healthy lifestyle habits can help lower the chances of developing this condition.

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- For those who are overweight, lose weight in a slow and healthy way. As a guideline, losing 5-10% of your starting weight over a period of 6 months can help reduce your chances of developing gallstones.
- Eat a diet high in fiber, low in refined carbohydrates and sugar, and low in unhealthy fats.
- Avoid skipping meals. Eating regularly helps prevent the formation of gallstones.
- Exercise regularly. A good goal is 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise most days of the week.

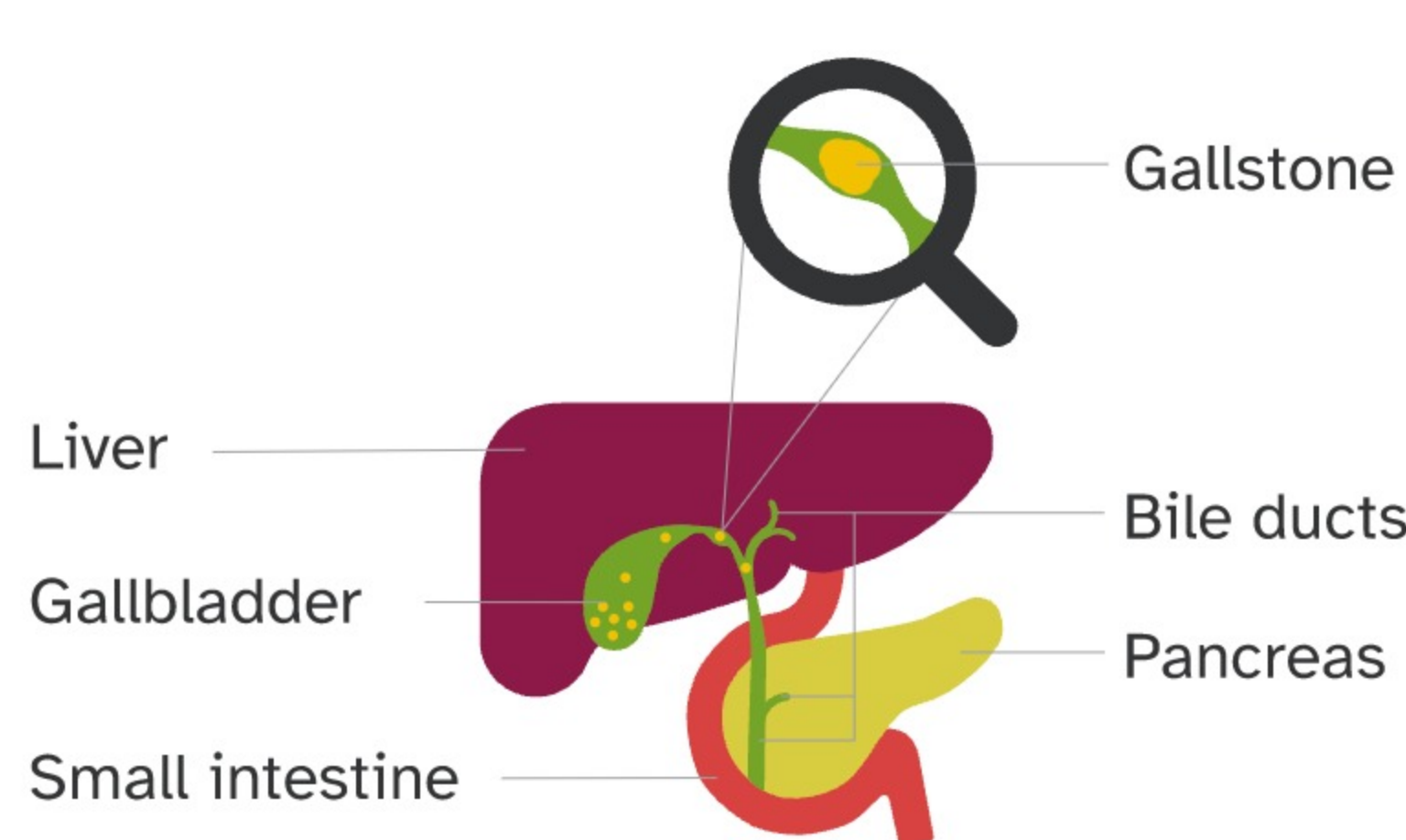


[Learn more from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases](#)

About gallstones

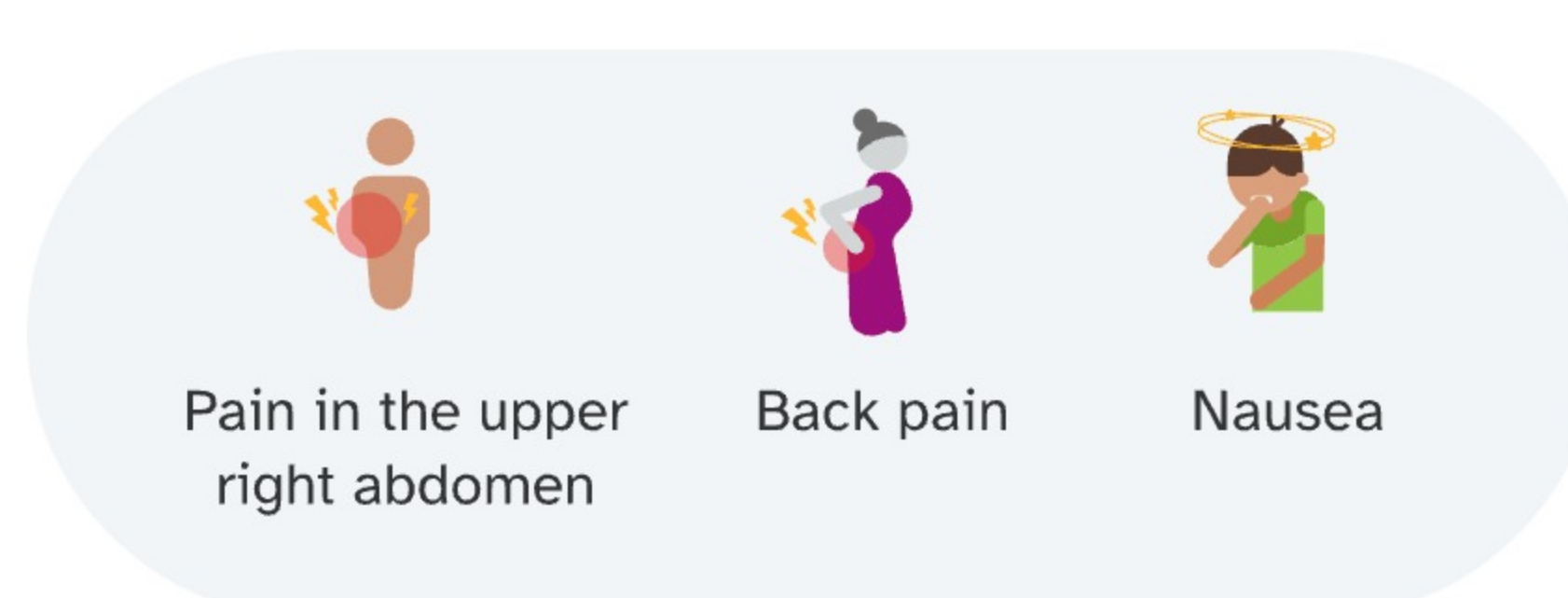
What are gallstones?

The gallbladder is a small, pouch-like organ underneath the liver that stores bile, a fluid that helps digest fats in the small intestine. Gallstones are solid, pebble-like masses that form in the gallbladder and are typically classified into two types depending on their makeup. Cholesterol gallstones, which make up 80% of gallstones experienced among people in the U.S., are caused by having too much cholesterol in the gallbladder. Pigment gallstones are caused by having too much bilirubin (a type of pigment) in the gallbladder. Gallstones can range in size from a grain of sand to a golf ball and may be caused by a combination of genetic and non-genetic factors.



How can gallstones impact your health?

Most gallstones do not cause any symptoms. However, gallstones may block the outlet of the gallbladder, especially after a large or fatty meal. These blockages, called gallbladder attacks, can cause nausea and severe pain in the back and upper right abdomen. Gallbladder attacks last until the gallstone stops blocking the gallbladder outlet, usually no more than a few hours. People who have previously had gallbladder attacks are more likely to experience them in the future.



If a gallbladder attack persists for more than a few hours or is accompanied by fever and/or chills, this may indicate that a gallstone is stuck in the gallbladder outlet or in a [bile duct](#). This can cause serious complications including inflammation of the gallbladder ([cholecystitis](#)) and/or pancreas ([pancreatitis](#)) that require immediate medical attention and often result in surgery to remove the gallbladder.

Other factors that can impact your chances of developing gallstones

It is estimated that 15% of the U.S. population has gallstones. Besides genetics, some factors that can increase a person's chances of developing gallstones include:

- Age
- Family history
- Ethnicity (having Indigenous American or Mexican ancestry)
- Sex (gallstones are more common in females than males and can occur more often during pregnancy)
- Certain health conditions (including diabetes, Crohn's disease, blood disorders, and liver disease)
- Taking certain medications (including estrogen-containing medicines such as oral contraceptives and hormone replacement therapy)



Age



Family history



Ethnicity



Sex



Certain health conditions



Certain medications

Keep in mind

This report **does not diagnose** gallstones. **Consult with a healthcare professional** if you are concerned about your likelihood of developing gallstones, have a personal or family history of gallstones, or before making any major lifestyle changes.



If you have already been diagnosed with gallstones by a healthcare professional, it is important to **continue any treatment plans** that they prescribe, including medications and lifestyle modifications.



The likelihood of developing gallstones also depends on **other factors**, including lifestyle, age, and family history.



This report **does not account for every possible genetic variant** that could influence the likelihood of developing gallstones.



This report is based on a genetic model **created using data from 23andMe research participants**. It has not been clinically validated and should not be used to make medical decisions.

[How we got your result](#) ▾



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