

# 6

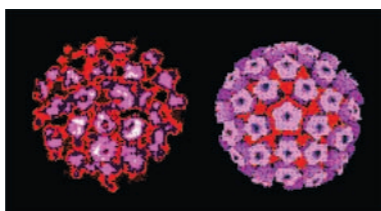
## Infection

Infections cause some 1.9 million cases of cancer – 17.8 percent of the global total. The most important agent is the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori* (the cause of 5.6 percent of all cancers), which increases the risk of stomach cancer between five and six fold. Infection with this bacterium is extremely common, especially in developing countries, but is reducing in recent generations.

All cervical cancers result from infection with some 20 types of Human papillomavirus (HPV), as do most of the much rarer cancers of the anus, and probably about half of the cancers of the external genitalia. HPV causes smaller proportions of cancers of the mouth and oro-pharynx, and possibly respiratory cancers.

Chronic infection by the two hepatitis viruses, B (HBV) and C (HCV), is common. Each increases the risk of liver cancer 20 fold or more; together they are responsible for more than 85 percent of the liver cancer in the world. The Epstein-Barr virus, and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), together with the Human herpesvirus-8, are each responsible for about 100,000 new cancer cases a year. Relatively less important causes of cancer are the schistosomes, Human T-cell Lymphotropic Virus type I, and the liver flukes.

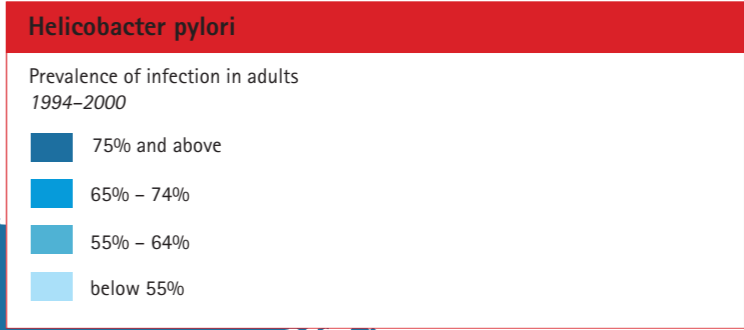
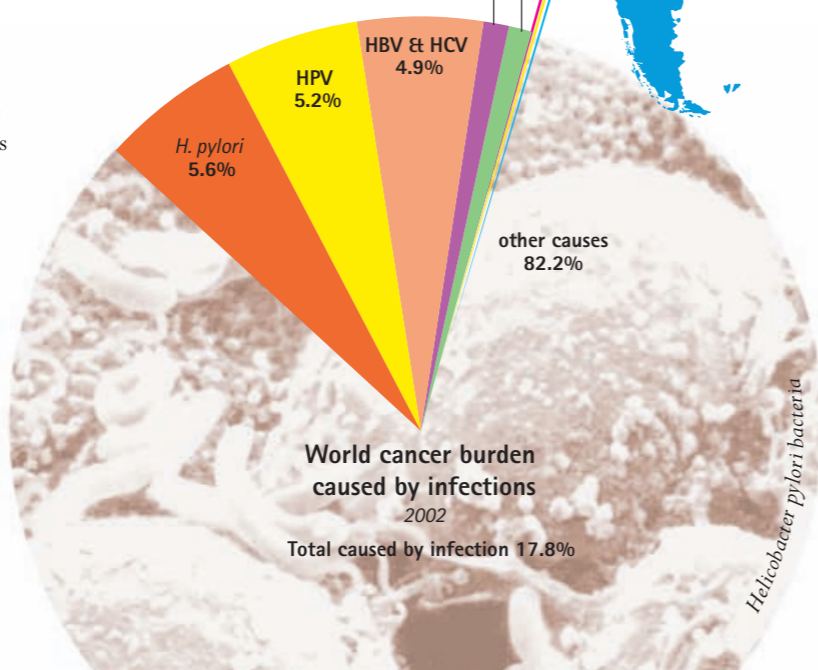
There would be 26.2% fewer cancers in developing countries (1.5 million cases per year) and 7.7% in developed countries (380,000 cases) if these infectious agents were prevented.



Human papillomavirus.

About 1 in 4 cancers in developing countries is caused by infection.

- liver flukes <0.1%
- HTLV-I <0.1%
- schistosomes 0.1%
- HIV/HHV-8 0.9%
- EBV 1.0%



1.9 million cases of cancer worldwide were caused by infections in 2002.

