Table 1

Risk factors for the development of gallstones

Cholesterol stones

- Demography: Northern Europeans, North and South Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans
- Family history and genetics
- Advancing age
- Female sex hormones: female gender, oral contraceptive use, pregnancy
- Obesity (BMI > 30) and metabolic syndrome
- Rapid weight reduction
- Gallbladder stasis (neurogenic or hormonal)
- Inborn disorders of bile acid metabolism

Pigment stones

- Demography: Asians more than Westerners, rural more than urban
- Advancing age
- Gallbladder stasis
- Chronic haemolytic syndromes (e.g. sickle cell anaemia, hereditary spherocytosis)
- Biliary infection (bacterial and parasitic)
- Gastrointestinal disorders: ileal disease, ileal resection or bypass, liver cirrhosis, Crohn's disease, cystic fibrosis
- Total parenteral nutrition