

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Lung cancer is very deceptive. At an early stage there are no symptoms. By the time it is diagnosed, it is usually advanced. See your health professional if you experience any of these symptoms:

- A cough that doesn't go away and gets worse over time
- Chest pain that doesn't go away
- Coughing up blood
- Feeling short of breath
- Wheezing
- Losing your voice (hoarseness)
- Getting sick with pneumonia and bronchitis a lot
- Swollen neck and face
- Not hungry, losing weight without trying
- Feeling tired

DIAGNOSIS

There are many tests used to diagnose lung cancer. These are but a couple tests your health professional may use to diagnose:

Mediastinoscopy. This test helps your health professional know if the cancer has spread to any of your lymph nodes (your body's lymphatic system).

CT Scan (Computerized Axial Tomography), **PET scan** (Positron Emission Tomography), and **MRI** (Magnetic Resonance Imaging). These are sophisticated tests that show images of the lungs and lymph nodes with much greater detail than a chest x-ray.

TREATMENT

Your treatment will depend on what kind of lung cancer you have, and what stage it is at (how serious it is). You may be treated with surgery, radiation therapy or chemotherapy

WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

Having a diagnosis of lung cancer can be scary, and it's normal for people with it to feel overwhelmed. What you can expect depends on many factors: what kind of lung cancer you have, how early it was found, if it has spread to other parts of your body, etc.

Health professionals are getting better at diagnosing and treating lung cancer, which means people with lung cancer have a better chance of recovering and living longer. Still, lung cancer is one of the deadliest cancers.

It is important for people with lung cancer to know what to expect and to plan for the future. Ask your health professional how serious your case is, what your options are, and what you should expect. It's also important to remember that not all lung cancers are the same, and that the treatment of the prognosis for one patient with lung cancer may be very different than the next person with lung cancer – that's why it is so important to talk to your health professional.

B R E A T H E
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Lung Cancer

What you need to know



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LUNG CANCER IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF CANCER DEATH

It has even surpassed breast cancer as the leading cause of cancer deaths in women; however, these deaths are preventable.

TYPES OF LUNG CANCER

Non-small cell lung cancer: most common type of lung cancer that usually spreads more slowly than some other lung cancers.

Small cell lung cancer: less common type of lung cancer but spreads faster than non-small-cell lung cancer.

CAUSES OF LUNG CANCER

The most common cause of lung cancer is **smoking**. However, it can also be caused by exposure to second-hand smoke and environmental exposure to things like chemicals, asbestos, radon, and petroleum products.

HOW SMOKING HURTS YOUR LUNGS:

Smoking damages your lungs by delivering cancer-causing chemicals inside you, and by damaging your lungs' natural cleaning and repair systems.

Smoke from cigarettes, cigars and pipes, is made up of over 4,000 dangerous chemicals; many of these chemicals are cancer-causing (carcinogens). Repeated exposure to carcinogens over several years increases the

number of abnormal cells that eventually form a tumor that clogs the lung and makes it difficult to work.

Normally, there is a thin layer of mucus and thousands of tiny hairs (cilia) lining the insides of your breathing tubes within your lungs. The mucus and cilia act as a natural cleaning system for your lungs. If you breathe in dirty or polluted air, the mucus traps the little bits of dirt, and the cilia move together like a wave to push the dirt-filled mucus out of your lungs. Then you cough, spit up, or swallow the mucus, and the dirt is out of your lungs.

Smoking can severely damage your lungs so that the natural cleaning system doesn't work. The mucus can't trap the dirty air you breathe, and the cilia can't push the dirty mucus out. The dirt and pollution get stuck in your lungs, and stay there. This means your lungs are not able to clean themselves anymore - they can't clean out the bits of dirt that come from polluted air, and they definitely can't clean out all the dangerous chemicals and smoke from cigarettes.

As dirt and smoke chemicals build up in your lungs, you have a higher chance of getting lung cancer. The more you smoke, or are exposed to cigarette smoke, the greater your risk of getting lung cancer.

OTHER CAUSES OF LUNG CANCER:

Some people who have never smoked may also get lung cancer. Other causes of lung cancer are:

Second-hand smoke: People who regularly breathe in other people's smoke have almost double the risk of getting lung cancer than people who stay away from smoke. It's a fact: Non-smokers who live or work in smoky air can

get lung cancer from second-hand smoke.

Radon: Radon is a gas found in the soil in many parts of the country. Radon can enter a building through cracks in the foundation or insulation, or through drains or walls. People who have a high exposure to radon at home, school and work are at higher risk of lung cancer.

Asbestos: Asbestos is found in many work-places and homes. In the past, it has been used in ovens, brake pads, insulation, and many other industrial products.

Other toxic products: Uranium, arsenic, some petroleum products may also increase the risk of developing lung cancer.

Sarcoidosis: Sarcoidosis is a chronic inflammatory disease that may affect almost any part of the body. People with Sarcoidosis are at a higher risk of getting lung cancer.

WHO IS AT RISK?

People exposed to any (or a combination) of these things are most at risk of developing lung cancer:

- Smoking cigarettes
- Smoking cigars & pipes
- Breathing in second-hand smoke
- Asbestos
- Radon

What is the best way to lower your risk of lung cancer?

Don't smoke, and if you do, quit. It's never too late to quit and the sooner you quit, the sooner your risk of lung cancer drops. Also, stay away from second-hand smoke.