

Lung Cancer

What is lung cancer?

Lung cancer is a tumor on your lung. It can make you cough, be short of breath, have chest pain, and cough up blood. As the cancer gets worse or spreads, you may not want to eat as much as normal, and you may lose weight, lose your energy, and become weak.

How common is it?

Lung cancer is the cause of death of more Americans than breast, colon, prostate, liver, and kidney cancers combined. Each year in the United States, around 130,000 people die from lung cancer.

What if I find out I have lung cancer?

You will need tests to figure out which type of lung cancer you have. There are two main types: small cell lung cancer and non-small cell lung cancer. Treatment depends on the type, size, and location of the cancer. Treatment options include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, and immunotherapy.

A team of doctors, including lung doctors (pulmonologists), cancer doctors (oncologists), chest surgeons (thoracic surgeons), and radiologists, will help you and your family doctor choose the best treatment options. Others, such as social workers, case managers, and nurses, may also assist in your care. Your family doctor can help coordinate your care inside and outside the hospital.

How can I prevent lung cancer?

The main cause of lung cancer is smoking. Never smoking is the best way to prevent lung cancer, and stopping smoking is helpful. If you are a smoker, talk to your doctor about ways you can quit. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends a computed tomography (CT) scan to check for lung cancer in patients 50 to 80 years of age who have averaged a pack a day for 20 years and who still smoke or have quit smoking only in the past 15 years.

Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

American Lung Association

<https://www.lung.org/lung-health-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/lung-cancer/resource-library/lung-cancer-fact-sheet>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/lung>

National Cancer Institute

<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/lung>

National Comprehensive Cancer Network

Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer –Early and Locally Advanced

<https://www.nccn.org/patientresources/patient-resources/guidelines-for-patients/guidelines-for-patients-details?patientGuidelineId=11>

Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer—Metastatic

<https://www.nccn.org/patientresources/patient-resources/guidelines-for-patients/guidelines-for-patients-details?patientGuidelineId=23>

Small Cell Lung Cancer

<https://www.nccn.org/patientresources/patient-resources/guidelines-for-patients/guidelines-for-patients-details?patientGuidelineId=59>

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