

Lung Cancer

What is lung cancer?

Lung cancer is a tumor inside your lung. It can cause you to 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 kills more Americans than breast, colon, prostate, liver, and kidney cancers combined. Each year in the United States, around 200,000 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 of lung cancer: small cell and non-small cell. There are different treatments depending on the type, size, and location of the cancer. Treatment options include surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy.

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 cancer nurses, may also assist in your care. Your family doctor can help coordinate your care both inside and outside the hospital.

How can I prevent it?

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 USPSTF recommends a CT scan to check for lung cancer in patients who are 55 to 80 years of age with increased risk.

Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

American Lung Association

<http://www.lung.org/lung-disease/lung-cancer/resources/facts-figures/lung-cancer-fact-sheet.html>

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

<http://www.nccn.org/patients/guidelines/nscl/index.html>

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This handout is provided to you by your family doctor and the American Academy of Family Physicians. Other health-related information is available from the AAFP online at <http://familydoctor.org>.

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