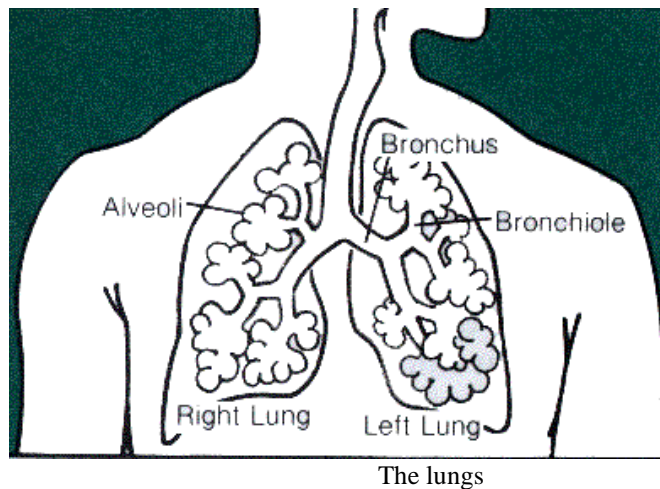


## November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month

### What Is Lung Cancer?

Lung cancer is the uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells in one or both of the lungs. While normal lung tissue cells reproduce and grow into healthy lung tissue, these abnormal cells reproduce rapidly and never grow into normal lung tissue. Lumps of cancer cells (tumors) then form and disrupt the lung, making it difficult to function properly.



The lungs, a pair of sponge-like, cone-shaped organs, are part of the respiratory system. The right lung has three sections, called lobes; it is a little larger than the left lung, which has two lobes. When we breathe in, the lungs take in oxygen, which our cells need to live and carry out their normal functions. When we breathe out, the lungs get rid of carbon dioxide, which is a waste product of the body's cells.

Lung cancer almost always begins in one lung and, if left untreated, can spread to lymph nodes or other tissues in the chest (including the other lung). Lung cancer can also metastasize (or spread) throughout the body to the bones, brain, liver, or other organs.

Cancers that begin in the lungs are divided into two major types, non-small cell lung cancer and small cell lung cancer, depending on how the cells look under a microscope. Each type of lung cancer grows and spreads in different ways and is treated differently.

### What Are the Key Statistics about Lung Cancer?

- Approximately 23,340 new cases of lung cancer will be diagnosed the US in 2023.
- An estimated 127,070 people will die in 2023 from lung cancer.
- Lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer deaths for men and women. Each year, lung cancer kills more men than prostate cancer and more women than breast cancer.
- The five-year relative survival rate is approximately 60% when localized, but less than 20% of lung cancer is detected at this early stage.

## **What are the Risk Factors for Lung Cancer?**

- Tobacco smoke: More than 80% of lung cancers are smoking related.
- Secondhand smoke: Secondhand smoke is the third most common cause of lung cancer in the US
- Exposure to radon
- Exposure to asbestos
- Exposure to cancer-causing agents in the workplace
- Air pollution
- Previous radiation therapy to the lungs
- Personal or family history of lung cancer

## **What are Signs and Symptoms of Lung Cancer?**

The most common symptoms are:

- A cough that does not go away or gets worse
- Coughing up blood or rust-colored sputum (phlegm)
- Chest pain that is worse with deep breathing, coughing or laughing
- Hoarseness
- Loss of appetite
- Unexplained weight loss
- Feeling tired or weak
- Recurrent pneumonia or bronchitis
- Shortness of breath

Other symptoms if lung cancer has spread to other parts of the body:

- Bone pain
- Nervous system changes such as headaches, dizziness, weakness in arms or legs, or seizures
- Yellowing of the skin and eyes
- Headache, bone pain, aching joints
- Swelling of lymph nodes

## **Can Lung Cancer Be Found Early?**

The National Lung Screening Trial (NLST) was a large clinical trial that compared two ways of detecting lung cancer: low-dose spiral computed tomography (CT) and standard chest X-ray. The study found that people who got the low-dose spiral CT had a 20% lower chance of dying from lung cancer than those who got chest x-rays.

Lung cancer screening is recommended for certain people who smoke or used to smoke and do not have any signs of lung cancer. Your healthcare provider can tell you if you are eligible for this screening.

## **Can Lung Cancer Be Prevented?**

Not all lung cancer can be prevented but there are ways you may lower your risk:

- Don't smoke and avoid breathing secondhand smoke
- Avoid radon exposure

- Avoid or limit exposure to cancer-causing agents
- Eat a healthy diet

Help to stop smoking is available online at [www.tobaccoprogram.org](http://www.tobaccoprogram.org) or from:

**Rutgers-Tobacco Dependence Program**  
**125 Paterson Street**  
**Suite 2300**  
**New Brunswick, NJ 08903**  
**732-235-8222**

The **Tobacco Dependence Clinic** provides state of the art treatment tailored to your individual needs at no cost to you. You may choose to make use of one or more of the following to help you quit: individual treatment, group treatment, nicotine replacement therapy and /or other pharmacological aids (for example, Zyban<sup>®</sup>).

### **Cancer Prevention Trials at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey**

If you would like information about clinical trials for preventing cancer, please call Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey's Office of Human Research Services at 732-235-7356. For additional information about nationwide cancer prevention trials, you can call the National Cancer Institute at 1-800-4 CANCER or visit their website at [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov).

## Where Can I Find Further Information?

Resource and Learning Center

732-235-9639

[www.cinj.org/rlc](http://www.cinj.org/rlc)

Provides reliable, relevant and current information about all aspects of cancer.

GO2 for Lung Cancer

1-800-298-2436 (helpline)

[www.go2.org](http://www.go2.org)

Lungevity

1-844-360-5864 (helpline)

[www.lungevity.org](http://www.lungevity.org)

National Cancer Institute

1-800-4-CANCER

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

The American Cancer Society

1-800-ACS-2345

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

The Great American Smokeout

1-800-ACS-2345

[www.cancer.org/healthy/stayawayfromtobacco/greatamericansmokeout/index](http://www.cancer.org/healthy/stayawayfromtobacco/greatamericansmokeout/index)

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RLC lung cancer website QR code. Scan with smartphone / device.