

LUNG CANCER

What You Should Know About **Risks, Screening** and **Symptoms**



Lung Cancer Risk Factors

Your risk for lung cancer is unique to you. Cancer risk increases with age. Here are some questions which may help you determine if you could be at risk for lung cancer.

- Have you ever smoked cigarettes, cigars and/or pipes?
- Have you been exposed to excessive amounts of secondhand smoke?
- Have you had exposure to radon or asbestos?
- Is there a history of lung cancer in your immediate family?
- Are you active military or a veteran? Did your military service expose you to depleted uranium, Agent Orange or other cancer causing materials?
- Have you worked in an occupation that exposed you to known carcinogens?
- Have you been diagnosed with other respiratory diseases such as emphysema, COPD, tuberculosis?

If you answered “yes” to even one of these questions, consult your physician to discuss the risks and benefits of getting a CT scan to screen for lung cancer.

Lung Cancer Screening

What is cancer screening?

A test given to people who have no symptoms. The goal of screening is to find cancer early when it can be treated and cured.

What are some examples of cancer screening?

Mammograms for breast cancer. Pap smears for cervical cancer. Colonoscopies for colon cancer.

Is there a way to screen for lung cancer?

Currently only CT scans are proven effective as a screening test for lung cancer.

Should everybody be screened for lung cancer?

No. So far it has only been tested and shown to reduce deaths in current and former heavy smokers over age 50.

What is my risk of lung cancer?

One in ten if you are a heavy smoker. Less if you have already stopped. Much less if you never smoked at all.

Why should I consider being screened?

Lung cancer usually shows no obvious symptoms until it is late stage and difficult to treat. Early stage lung cancer is more treatable and curable.

Where should I be screened?

At a center with an experienced team of doctors who follow a proven screening method.

How often will I need to be screened?

Talk to your doctor about the results of your first screening to decide how to move forward.

Lung Cancer Symptoms

Lung cancer often has no symptoms until it has spread. When lung cancer symptoms do occur, they are similar to those of other common illnesses. Often they may include:

- Coughing (most common)
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Hoarseness
- Coughing up blood
- Fatigue
- Chest, shoulder, back or arm pain
- Pneumonia

If you are experiencing one or more of these symptoms and they do not go away, talk with your doctor about your medical and social history to assist in a prompt and accurate diagnosis. If you or a loved one is diagnosed, Lung Cancer Alliance is here to help. Contact our toll free information line, **(800) 298-2436**.

About Lung Cancer Alliance

Lung Cancer Alliance is the only national non-profit organization dedicated solely to providing support and advocacy for people living with or at risk for the disease. Our mission is to lead the movement to reverse decades of stigma and neglect by empowering those living with or at risk for the disease, elevating awareness and changing health policy.

What we do:

- Provide live, real time support, referral and information services for patients, their loved ones and those at risk for the disease.
- Conduct national awareness campaigns, such as **Team Lung Love** and the **National Shine A Light on Lung Cancer Vigil** to educate the public about the facts, dispel myths and share calls to action that will reduce the stigma of the disease.
- Advocate for multiple millions in public health dollars for lung cancer research by using targeted political strategies mobilizing a nationwide network of volunteer advocates.

How you can help:

- Become a volunteer
- Participate in the **National Shine a Light on Lung Cancer Vigil**
- Sign up for **Team Lung Love**
- Contact Congress and ask for support of the Lung Cancer Mortality Reduction Act
- Donate



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Lung Cancer Alliance's (LCA) programs are made possible by generous support from people like you. Please consider giving back so that others may continue to receive these free services. LCA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the full extent permitted by law.