



Lung Cancer 2009 Fact Sheet

Introduction

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women—an estimated 219,440 people will be diagnosed and an estimated 159,390 will die of lung cancer in 2009. Lung cancer accounts for about 15 percent of all new cancer diagnoses and about 28 percent of all cancer deaths in 2009 estimates. Men have a one in 13 average lifetime chance of developing lung cancer, and, for women, it is one in 16. More people die of lung cancer than of colon, breast and prostate cancers combined. Tobacco use is the most important risk factor for lung cancer.

At Risk

- People who use tobacco
- People who are exposed to second-hand smoke
- People who have had exposure to substances such as arsenic, radon or asbestos
- People whose occupations expose them to radiation
- People who are exposed to air pollution

Risk Reduction and Early Detection

- Don't smoke.
- Avoid second-hand smoke
- Create smoke-free environments in your home and community.
- Check your home for radon (Qualified contractors can be located through state radon offices, which are listed on the EPA web site at www.epa.gov/iaq/contacts.html.)
- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables.
- Be physically active and exercise regularly.

A spiral CT scan can detect early lung cancer in people who are smokers and former smokers. Research is under way to determine whether spiral CT screening reduces death from lung cancer. Speak with your health care professional to learn more about the risks and benefits of this approach.

Symptoms

In the early stages, there may be no symptoms. Later these symptoms may occur:

- Persistent cough
- Sputum (spit) streaked with blood
- Chest pain
- Recurring pneumonia or bronchitis
- Weight loss and loss of appetite
- Hoarseness

Treatment

Lung cancer treatment is determined by the type, either small cell or non-small cell, the size of the tumor and whether or not it has spread.

- Surgery is the usual treatment for localized disease.
- Radiation and chemotherapy are sometimes used in combination with surgery for later stages.

New, less invasive surgery may allow for faster recovery with results similar to older, more aggressive surgery.