

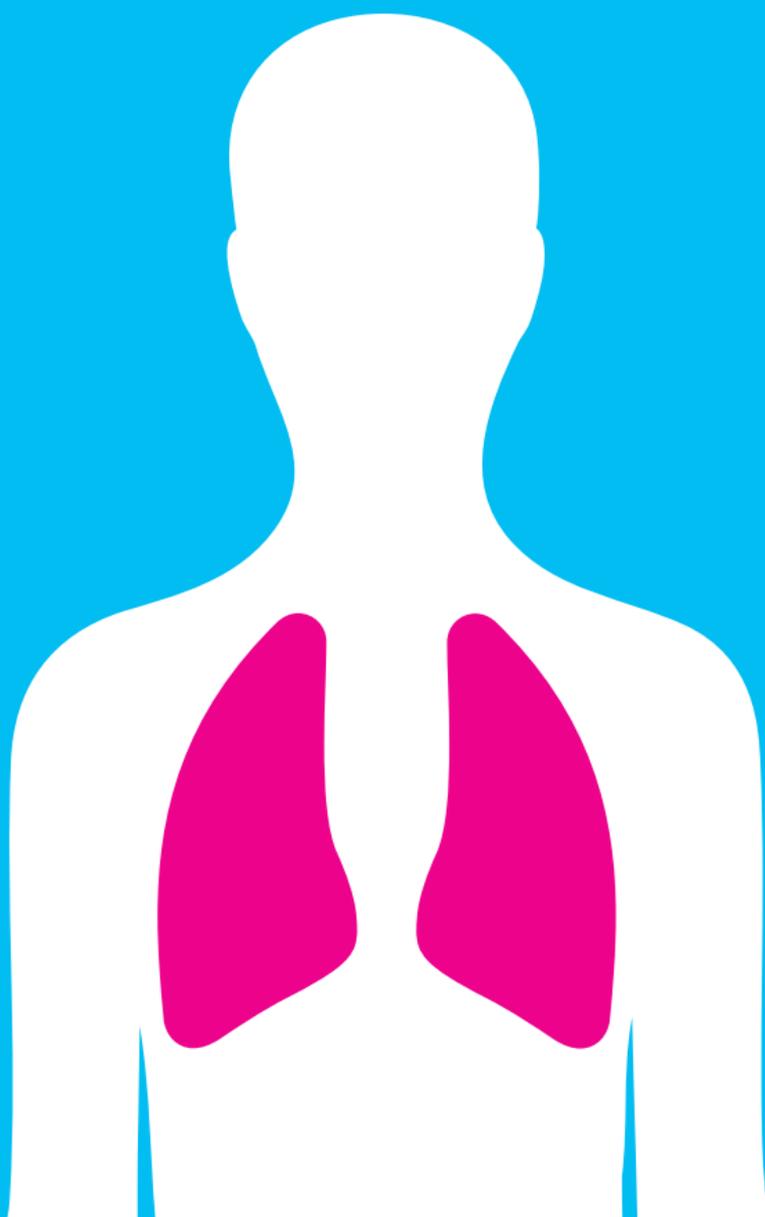
LUNG CANCER

How to spot the signs and symptoms
and reduce your risk

cruk.org



CANCER
RESEARCH
UK



Lung cancer is the second most common cancer in the UK. Anyone can develop lung cancer, but risk increases with age and smoking is the main cause of the disease.

When lung cancer is found at an early stage, there is a better chance of successful treatment. So spotting cancer early can make a real difference.

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In this leaflet you can find out:

- what signs and symptoms to look out for and why it is important to get them checked out
- how to reduce the risk of lung cancer

How can you reduce your risk?

Smoking is the main cause of lung cancer and is linked to more than 8 in 10 cases in the UK. As well as the amount you smoke, how long you smoke for has a strong impact on cancer risk.

The good news is it's never too late to quit. But the damage caused by smoking builds up over time. So the sooner you quit, the better.



**Did you know?
Smokers are far
more likely to quit
with professional
support.**

For help quitting call

England: 0300 123 1044

Scotland: 0800 848484

Wales: 0800 0852219

Northern Ireland: 0800 8128008

Anyone can develop lung cancer. But people who smoke (or used to smoke) have a higher risk. Smoking affects people around you too. Second-hand smoke can increase a non-smoker's risk of lung cancer by about a quarter.

Eating fruit and vegetables may reduce the risk of lung cancer.

What else affects your risk?

- **Age:** Lung cancer is more common in older people. Most cases are in people aged 60+.
- **Chest problems:** People who have had chest problems, such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema (which are two types of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease – COPD), pneumonia or tuberculosis have a higher risk.
- **Your surroundings:**
 - Radon** is a natural gas that can increase the risk of lung cancer. Levels of radon vary around the UK and between different homes and buildings. If you are worried visit www.ukradon.org.
 - Air pollution** increases the risk of lung cancer. The increased risk is small for individuals, but because everyone is exposed to some air pollution, it has an important effect across the population.
 - Asbestos** was used by some industries before it was banned in the UK in 1999. It can cause lung cancer and mesothelioma (a rare type of cancer that affects the outer lining of the lungs).
- **Jobs:** People who work in certain jobs may have higher risks of cancer because of exposure to certain chemicals.
- **Lung cancer family history:** If a close relative has had lung cancer, the risk may be higher.
- **Previous cancer:** The risk may be higher if you have had some types of cancer before.

What should you look out for?

If you notice any of these signs or symptoms it is important to get them checked out:

- A cough that won't go away
- A change in a cough you have had for a long time
- Being short of breath
- Coughing up blood, even small amounts
- An ache or pain in your chest or shoulder
- Unexplained tiredness or weight loss
- Loss of appetite.

Some of these symptoms are very common and may not be caused by cancer. But you've got nothing to lose by getting them checked out. And if it is serious, you could have everything to gain.

Anyone can develop lung cancer, so it is best to see your doctor if you have any changes to your body that are unusual or don't go away.

If anybody has any signs or symptoms that they are worried about, just go to your doctor. I'm sure I wouldn't be here if I hadn't gone to my doctor

Ann Long,
lung cancer survivor

Busting lung cancer myths

Fact:
It is always
worth giving up,
no matter how
long you have
smoked.



False: Lung cancer cannot be cured.



True: When lung cancer is spotted at an early stage, the chances of surviving are much higher.



False: Only cigarette smokers develop lung cancer.



True: While most lung cancers are in smokers, not all of them are.



False: If you've smoked for many years, there's no point giving up.



True: Quitting reduces the risk of developing lung cancer and other diseases compared to if you continued to smoke. And it's still worth quitting even if you've smoked for many years. It also increases the chances of responding better to treatment.

I feel as if I've
been given a
second chance



Jim Richardson
Lung cancer survivor

"I started smoking at 16 purely because it was considered cool. My friends thought it was odd if you didn't smoke. I was on about 20 a day.

Forty years after my first cigarette, I faced the toughest day of my life, telling my children I had lung cancer.

I was devastated at the thought that I might not see my three grandchildren growing up. My prognosis was pretty poor, but I began chemotherapy treatment immediately, followed by radiotherapy.

To my absolute joy and gratitude the treatment seems to be working and I feel as if I've been given a second chance."

Further information

You can find out more about cancer at www.cruk.org/about-cancer

For more about the signs and symptoms of cancer visit www.spotcancerearly.com

Find out more about our health messages at www.cruk.org/health

If you want to talk in confidence about cancer, call our information nurses on freephone **0808 800 4040**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

All our leaflets are thoroughly researched and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. They are reviewed by independent experts and updated regularly. You can order our full range of leaflets free online at www.cruk.org/leaflets

About Cancer Research UK

We pioneer life-saving research to bring forward the day when all cancers are cured. From our volunteers and supporters to our scientists, doctors and nurses, we're all here to save more lives and prevent, control and cure all cancers.

Together we will beat cancer sooner. If you want to join the fight, call **0300 123 1861** or visit our website www.cruk.org