

Spot lung cancer early

Listen to
your body

To learn more about spotting the signs of lung cancer, read this information.

Lung cancer is more common in people aged 50 and over, and in people who smoke. But it can affect anyone at any age, including people who don't smoke.

If you spot something unusual, tell your doctor. In most cases it won't be cancer, but if it is, finding it at an early stage means treatment is more likely to be successful.



Listen to your body

You know your body best, so don't ignore something that doesn't seem quite right.

The symptoms listed here can all be caused by something other than cancer, but it's important to tell your doctor if you notice any of them.

Even if it's not on the list, if it's not normal for you, don't wait and see. Get it checked out.

- Feeling short of breath or having difficulty breathing
- A long-lasting cough
- A change in a cough you've had for a while
- Loss of appetite
- Feeling tired for no reason
- Losing weight without trying to
- A chest infection that doesn't get better or comes back
- An ache or pain in your chest or shoulder
- Coughing up blood – even small amounts



Talk to your doctor

Whether it's via phone, video or face-to-face, your doctor wants to hear about any unusual changes you're experiencing. If you're worried about talking to a doctor, here are some tips:

✓ Be prepared

Think about how to describe any changes and how long you've had them for. Writing down what you want to say and ask can help.

✓ Be honest

Tell the doctor about anything unusual, even if it doesn't seem important. It's also helpful to tell your doctor if you currently smoke or used to smoke. Your doctor is not there to judge, but the more they know the more they can help.

✓ Be thorough

Mention all your symptoms and don't put it down to 'just getting older', or assume it's part of another health condition.

✓ Stick with it

Don't worry about wasting your GP's time. Even if you're struggling to get an appointment, or you've been to see them already, they want to know if something's still not right.



Screening for lung cancer

Lung cancer screening helps to find lung cancer at an early stage, when treatment is more likely to be successful.

It's called targeted lung cancer screening because it's for people at higher risk of the disease. The programme is new, so it will take some time before it's available across the UK.

People will be invited if:

- they are 55–74 years old
- **and** they currently smoke or used to smoke

At the appointment, a health professional will ask you questions.

Based on this information some people will then be offered a CT scan of their lungs.

Lung cancer screening has both benefits and harms. If you're invited, read the information carefully to decide if you would like to take part.

Screening is for people who have no symptoms. Tell your doctor if you notice anything unusual for you – don't wait for screening.



Stop smoking for good

Not all cancer cases are caused by smoking, but smoking tobacco is the biggest cause of lung cancer in the UK.

Even light or occasional smoking increases the risk. And it's not just cigarettes – there's no safe way to use tobacco.

But it's never too late to quit. Stopping smoking completely is the best way to reduce your risk of lung cancer.

How you stop is up to you, so find the way that works for you:

- Medicine prescribed by your GP
- Switching to vapes (e-cigarettes)
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) such as nicotine patches, gum and nasal spray

For the best chance of success, get support from your free, local stop smoking service or GP.



Early diagnosis saves lives

What if it is cancer?

Cancer survival is increasing – more people are surviving their cancer today than ever before.

When cancer is spotted at an early stage, treatment is more likely to be successful. And thanks to research, treatments are now kinder and more effective than ever.

How to find out more

Visit our website

Find out more about spotting cancer early, including information about cancer screening across the UK, at:

cruk.org/spotcancerearly

Give us a call

Our Nurse Helpline is there if you're looking for information or support. Just call **0800 800 4040**.

If you'd like to provide any feedback on this leaflet or would like to know more about the information sources used to create it, please email **publications@cancer.org.uk**

And if you have any questions about Cancer Research UK or would like to support what we're doing, you can call **0300 123 1022**.

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