

# Spot lung cancer early



CANCER  
RESEARCH  
UK

Together we will beat cancer

## Take charge

If you want to know more about spotting the signs of lung cancer, this leaflet is for you.

You'll learn:

- what to look out for
- tips for telling your doctor if something's not quite right
- ways to reduce your risk

When it comes to your health, remember you're in charge.

## Listen to your body

You know your body best, so don't ignore something that doesn't seem quite right. This might be something new, or a change to a symptom you've had for a while.

The symptoms below can all be caused by something less serious than cancer, but it's important to tell your doctor if you notice even one of them:

- Feeling short of breath or having difficulty breathing
- A cough that won't go away
- 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 repeated chest infection
- An ache or pain in your chest
- Coughing up blood – even small amounts

Even if it's not on the list above, if it's not normal for you, don't wait and see. Get it checked out. In most cases it won't be cancer. But if it is, finding it early can make a real difference.

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## Cut your risk

Although anyone can develop lung cancer, it's far more common in people who smoke. It's not just cigarettes – other types of tobacco like shisha also increase your risk.

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

You're around three times more likely to stop successfully with support from your free, local stop smoking service. They help thousands of people quit smoking every year.

Stopping smoking can also protect your friends and family, as second-hand smoke increases their risk of lung cancer too.

## What are my other stop smoking options?



Medicine prescribed by your GP



E-cigarettes (vapes)



Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) such as nicotine patches, gum and nasal spray

## What else affects your risk?

**Age:** As with most cancers, the risk of lung cancer increases as people get older

**Environment:** Air pollution increases the risk of lung cancer. But the risk is very small compared to smoking.

## Early diagnosis saves lives

Remember, when lung cancer is spotted at an early stage, treatment is more likely to be successful. Thanks to research, treatments are now kinder and more effective than ever.

## How to find out more

### We're online...



Find out more about spotting cancer early, including information about cancer screening across the UK, at [cr.uk.org/spotcancerearly](http://cr.uk.org/spotcancerearly)

### ...and on the phone



Our Nurse Helpline is there if you're looking for information or support. Just call **0808 800 4040**.

## Talk to your doctor

When you're worried that there's something wrong, telling a doctor can seem difficult.

Here are some ideas for how to get the most out of your appointment, whether it's via phone, video or a face to face conversation.



**Be honest.** Tell the doctor about anything unusual, even if it doesn't seem that important or you think it might be a bit embarrassing.



**Be thorough.** Mention all your symptoms and don't put it down to 'just getting older', or another health condition. If it's something that's bothering you, then your doctor will want to hear about it.



**Stick with it.** Don't worry you might be wasting your doctor's time. Even if you've spoken to them already, they want to know if your symptoms haven't gone away, or if something still doesn't feel quite right.



**Be prepared.** Think about how to describe any changes and how long you've had them for. Writing down what you want to say can help. It can also be useful to have a list of any medications that you take, including over-the-counter or herbal remedies.

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