

Lung Cancer

Early Detection is Vital



Lung cancer can affect anyone at any age but it is commoner in people who are older, usually aged 50 years and above.

It affects men and women.

Smoking greatly increases the risk of lung cancer, around 8 out of every 10 cases of lung cancer are caused by smoking.

People who do not smoke can also get lung cancer.

Exposure to second hand smoke, radon and certain chemicals such as asbestos or arsenic also increases the risk of lung cancer.

Detect Lung Cancer Early

If lung cancer is found early, your chances of survival are much better than if it is picked up late.

Contact your doctor if you have any of the following signs or symptoms:

- A new cough lasting for 3 weeks or more
- A change to a cough that you have had for a long time
- Breathlessness more than is normal for you
- Coughing up blood
- Unexplained chest pain
- Chest infections that keep coming back
- Weight loss without trying to lose weight
- Extreme tiredness that you can't explain

Know the signs and symptoms of lung cancer and talk to your GP without delay if you are concerned.

Reduce Your Risk of Developing Lung Cancer

- Smoking increases risk of lung cancer, for you and the people around you ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾. You can make your home and car smoke free. For support to quit go to www.quit.ie or call 1800 201 203.
- Radon is a naturally occurring gas found in the environment. When it enters houses or other buildings it can build to high levels increasing risk of lung cancer. Building regulations aim to reduce this risk by ensuring buildings are fitted with radon barriers and radon sumps where required. People who smoke AND are exposed to high levels of radon have a significantly increased risk of lung cancer ⁽¹⁾⁽³⁾. The [Environmental Protection Agency website](#) provides information on how to check your home for radon gas levels and advice on how to reduce levels in your home.
- Some workplace substances increase risk of lung cancer, such as arsenic or asbestos ⁽⁴⁾. Follow your workplace health and safety instructions to help reduce your risk of exposure to cancer-causing substances.
- If you have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) you are at a higher risk of lung cancer. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of lung cancer and talk to your GP without delay if you are concerned ⁽⁵⁾.
- Having a close relative (e.g. parent, brother, sister) who has had lung cancer may mean you have a higher risk of lung cancer. If you are worried about a sign or symptom call you GP ⁽⁴⁾.

For more information visit

- [HSE's National Cancer Control Programme Cancer Prevention Hub](#)
- [HSE's National Cancer Control Programme Early Detection of Cancer Hub](#)
- [HSE National Quit Smoking Support service](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency website](#)

References

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4. [NCRI Cancer Factsheet: Lung](#)
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