

# Lung Cancer

## What to look for...

As with most cancers, lung cancer normally has no symptoms until it has spread significantly to other parts of the body.

- The “smoker’s cough”.
- Blood in mucus.
- Recurring bronchitis or pneumonia.
- Shortness of breath, [wheezing](#), persistent chest pain.
- Hoarseness.
- Swelling of the neck and face.
- Pain and weakness in the shoulder, arm, or hand.
- If cancer has spread to other parts of the body – fatigue, weakness, loss of weight, fever, very bad [headaches](#), and pain.

This disease is extremely common and is also one of the most preventable kinds of cancer. Nearly all cases of lung cancer have had their cause firmly linked with smoking.

Lung tumours almost always start in the bronchi, the airways of the lungs. And as such is called a primary cancer.

## Causes

There are reputed to be certain causes of this cancer. They are –

- Your genetic pattern.
- Smoking has been proven to cause lung cancer
- Passive smoking can also cause lung cancer, giving non-smokers who are with smokers a somewhat higher lung cancer risk than others.
- Workers who are exposed to asbestos, silica, mineral dusts, coal dust, arsenic, or the radioactive gas radon on a daily basis are much more likely than the average person to develop lung cancer.
- Diet may also influence lung cancer risk.

## Traditional Treatments

If surgery is an option, the patient has an excellent chance of surviving.

The challenge comes in detecting lung cancer early enough to make surgery possible. (You can see our Cancer section for more specific information on treatments).

There are a few factors to consider before performing surgery. The doctor must look at the type of lung cancer and how far it has spread and also on the patient’s overall health. As well as that other diseases and conditions may prevent surgery from being performed such as heart problems.

## **Complementary Therapies**

Once conventional treatment is under way, you may try alternative therapies to alleviate the pain, fear, and discomfort of cancer.

- Support-group therapy
- Improved nutrition and diet
- Massage, yoga and meditation.

## **Dietary Considerations**

Some nutritional studies suggest that certain vitamins and minerals offer protection against lung cancer. Various antioxidants, including [vitamins C](#) and [E](#) as well as beta carotene ([vitamin A](#)) and some other carotenoids, are believed to protect the lungs from the harmful effects of tobacco smoke and other carcinogens.

## **Prevention**

The best way to prevent lung cancer is not to smoke.

## **When to seek further professional advice**

- You develop any of the symptoms mentioned above.