

SMOKING, VAPING & LUNG CANCER

PEER EDUCATION



"LUNG CANCER IS THE #1 LEADING CAUSE OF CANCER-RELATED DEATH"

Each year, more people in the US die of lung cancer than of colon, breast, and prostate cancers combined.

RISK FACTORS

- Smoking (most common)
- Secondhand smoke
- Radon gas (natural radioactive gas from soil)
- Air pollution (especially in cities)
- Family history/genetics
- Workplace exposure (asbestos, chemicals)



Most lung cancers do not cause symptoms until they have spread too far to be cured.



SYMPTOMS OF EARLY LUNG CANCER:

- Persistent cough
- Chest pain
- Coughing up blood
- Hoarseness
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing

Early action matters—talk to a doctor immediately if you experience any symptoms!

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

“Lung cancer only happens to old people”

While risk increases with age, lung cancer can affect younger adults, especially if they have been exposed to secondhand smoke, pollution, or have a history of smoking or vaping.

“It’s too late to stop smoking; quitting is pointless”

Quitting smoking at any stage significantly reduces your risk of developing lung cancer and improves overall lung health and treatment outcomes.

“There’s nothing I can do to lower my chances of lung cancer”

Staying alert for possible signs of lung cancer can lead to early detection, and it’s important to see a doctor promptly if any of these symptoms appear. Avoiding exposure to common risk factors is also beneficial. Testing your home for radon, especially in areas it is commonly found in, is another important step. In the workplace, limiting exposure to known carcinogens like asbestos, radioactive materials, certain chemicals, and diesel exhaust is essential.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

“Pipes, vapes, and cigars aren’t a problem”

These alternatives expose the lungs to harmful chemicals and carcinogens.

“There’s no way to screen for lung cancer”

A test called a low-dose CT scan can detect lung cancer early, when it's most treatable.



TREATMENT OPTIONS

- Surgery
- Radiation Therapy
- Chemotherapy
- Targeted Therapy
- Immunotherapy

At later stages, there are fewer options. Tumors often can't be removed so treatments shift to slowing spread or relieving symptoms. Focus often becomes improving the patient's quality of life, not recovery.



Early detection gives patients more options – and better chances.