



AWARENESS

ON THE LOOKOUT FOR LUNG CANCER

Lung cancer can be very elusive because it is not always easy to detect. It shares symptoms with other conditions that are common and mild. Therefore, it is advised to consult with a qualified health professional and not self-diagnose, nor become distressed because one or more of the symptoms are present.

Lung cancer may not present any symptoms at all during the early stages. However, there are early signs that have been identified. According to the UK's National Health Services (NHS) the main symptoms include:

- a cough that doesn't go away after two or three weeks
- a long-standing cough that gets worse
- chest infections that keep coming back
- coughing up blood
- an ache or pain when breathing or coughing
- persistent breathlessness
- persistent tiredness or lack of energy
- loss of appetite or unexplained weight loss

The NHS lists less common symptoms such as curving or 'clubbing' of the fingers, trouble swallowing, hoarseness, wheezing, and chest and shoulder pain that persists.

The American Cancer Society says that risk factors for lung cancer may be lowered by avoiding exposure to "cancer-causing agents", like cigarette smoke (including second-hand smoke), and eating a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables.

The NHS agrees, adding exercise as another risk-lowering measure, "[For adults] at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week, plus strength-training exercises on at least 2 days each week."

Experts from the WebMD Cancer Center advise that it may not be too late to quit if you've smoked for years: "Quitting has almost-immediate benefits. Your circulation will improve, and your lungs will work better. Your lung cancer risk will start to drop over time."