



**Medical
Blueprints**

LUNG CANCER SCREENING: SOONER BETTER THAN LATER REPORT #2747

BACKGROUND: Each year in the U.S., approximately 228,150 people are diagnosed with lung cancer and nearly 142,670 die of the disease. Smoking is the leading cause of lung cancer. Around 60 to 65% of all new lung cancer diagnoses are among people who have never smoked or have already quit smoking. Of those, about 50% are former smokers and 10 to 15% have never smoked. Lung cancer takes more lives than breast, prostate and colon cancers combined, and accounts for 25% of all cancer deaths. Men's incidence rates began declining more than 20 years ago, while women's rates just recently began to decline slightly, after rising for many years. African American males are known to have the highest incidence of lung cancer and the highest death rate.

(Source: <https://www.lungcancerinitiativenc.org/lung-cancer-facts>)

LUNG CANCER SCREENING: Lung cancer screening can help find lung cancer at an early stage when it is easier to treat. Studies have shown that a low-dose CT scan is the only lung cancer screening tool that reduces the risk of dying from lung cancer. Lung cancer is considered a serious disease because by the time you have symptoms, it has likely already spread and will become more difficult to treat. Screening is looking for cancer before you have any symptoms, which can help find cancer at an early stage when it may be easier to treat. Lung cancer screening for those at high risk needs to be part of a preventive care strategy to catch more lung cancers early and significantly improve the low survival rates. Other screening tests such as chest X-rays and sputum cytology have not been found to be effective and are not recommended for screening.

(Source: <https://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/lung-cancer/learn-about-lung-cancer/lung-cancer-screening/>)

GAME-CHANGING ADVANCES FOR LUNG CANCER: University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center has participated in and is leading lung cancer immunotherapy clinical trials. For patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC, of which 85 percent of all lung cancers are) whose tumors test high for levels of an immune-blocking protein, PD-L1, immunotherapy was shown to be superior compared to chemotherapy. For a disease that had a five-year survival rate of only five percent for advanced stages, the addition of immunotherapy has improved that rate to 16 percent, and Ticiana Leal, MD, expects it to keep increasing. Another area of research making huge strides is in targeted therapies, and Dr. Leal calls lung cancer the "poster child" for these directed treatments in the era of precision medicine. "Our prior way of practicing was that all lung cancers are the same, and they all get treated the same way," Leal says. "One of the breakthroughs was understanding there are alterations within tumor cells that may be driving the cancer, and more importantly that we can identify that pathway and block it with a drug."

(Source: <https://www.uwhealth.org/news/game-changing-recent-advances-in-lung-cancer-treatment/52339>)

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