

Lung Cancer Symptoms

Cancer is one of those scary words that not too many people like to talk about. The three most common types of cancer are lung, breast, and prostate; lung cancer is the leading cause of death of both men and women. According to the American Lung Association, lung cancer has surpassed breast cancer to become the leading cause of cancer deaths in women. Smoking is one of the major causes of lung cancer in the United States, which is estimated to cause 90% of lung cancer cases. Pollution, exposure to radon, asbestos, and other toxins, including second hand smoke are also known causes. There may be no lung cancer symptoms present when the disease first develops, which makes earlier diagnosis more difficult. And we've all heard about someone dying from this type of cancer after experiencing few or no symptoms.

Unfortunately, people only visit their physician after they have been bothered by certain symptoms over a period of time. Many times, patients are unsure when to seek medical care and what questions to even ask the doctor once they do seek care. Patients suspected of having lung cancer symptoms should undergo a thorough physical examination. According to various websites dedicated to lung cancer education, patients who are suspected of having lung cancer frequently experience symptoms like cough, shortness of breath, wheezing, chest pain, spitting up blood, loss of appetite, or weight loss. Other less common lung cancer symptoms include pneumonia, weakness, chills, swallowing difficulties, and signs of oxygen deprivation, vis-à-vis finger and nail abnormalities, skin paleness, or bluish discoloration.

Diagnostic tools used to confirm lung cancer symptoms include chest x-ray, CAT scan, MRI scan, bronchoscopy, needle biopsy, bone scan, PET scan, and endoscopy. A sputum sample may also be obtained, and blood tests to check for cancer specific markers that indicate the presence of cancer. Recognizing lung cancer symptoms early increase the likelihood of survival, however, many symptoms do not present themselves until the disease has become advanced; six out of ten of these people die within one year of being diagnosed. Latest statistics from the American Lung Association show that the five year survival rate is only a mere 15.5 percent because many cases are not diagnosed soon enough. More information about lung cancer symptoms can be found at www.lungusa.org, www.gemzar.com, www.oncologychannel.com, www.cancer.about.com, www.webmd.com, or www.emedicinehealth.com. Get the facts about lung cancer symptoms - it just might save your life or the life of someone you love.