

Q: What are the early signs of lung cancer? How would I know I have it?

A: *Some of the early warning signs of lung cancer are:*

- *A cough that doesn't go away*
- *Chest pain*
- *Hoarseness*
- *Weight loss and loss of appetite*
- *Bloody or rust-colored sputum*
- *Shortness of breath*
- *Fever without a known reason*
- *Recurring infections such as bronchitis or pneumonia*

These symptoms can also come from other diseases, so seeing your health care provider is the only way to find out what may be causing these symptoms.

Q: How is lung cancer diagnosed?

A: *Your doctor may do one or more of the following procedures to help determine if you may have lung cancer :*

- *Complete medical history*
- *Physical exam*
- *Chest X-ray, or other X-ray procedures such as CT (computerized tomography) scan*
- *Sputum cytology to determine if there are cancer cells in the sputum*
- *Needle biopsy of a mass*
- *Bronchoscopy (a flexible scope inserted into the trachea and main airways) – this may include biopsies or fluid samples*
- *Other x-rays, scans, or special procedures to obtain biopsies or look for spread*

Q: What are the treatments for lung cancer?

A: *There are three main treatment options for lung cancer. They may be used separately or in combination. The treatment plan is chosen based on the stage and type of lung cancer. The three treatments are:*

- *Surgery – removal of all or as much as possible of the tumor*
- *Chemotherapy – intravenous (i.v.) medicine to kill the cancer*
- *Radiation therapy – high dose radiation designed to kill the cancer, given in a focused and shielded beam designed to only affect the tumor*

Q: What can I do to reduce my risk of lung cancer?

A: *The most important risk factor for lung cancer is tobacco smoking. Experts estimate 85 to 90% of lung cancers are due to smoking. Thus, the best way to prevent lung cancer is to not smoke. If you already smoke, you can reduce your risk over time by quitting. Additionally, everyone, especially babies and children, should avoid breathing in other people's smoke. You can also reduce your risk by testing your home for naturally occurring radon. If results of testing are confirmed to be 4 pCi/L or higher, you should fix your home to lower the radon level.*

Q: ALL THIS INFORMATION ON INCREASED LUNG CANCER RISK IS DISTURBING - WHAT ARE OTHERS DOING TO COPE?

Learning about the possibility of being at an increased risk for a disease can be very disturbing. Many people want to know what they can do about it. Here are some suggestions:

Pay attention to your body: watch for signs of health problems (the symptoms for lung cancer are shown at the left).

Seek health care if you are concerned: If you receive regular health care and have no signs of a health problem, you may not need to see your health care provider. However, if you lived within 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) of the FMPC facility between 1951 and 1988 and you have concerns about radon and/or uranium exposure or the possibility of lung cancer, you should talk with your health care provider. You may want to give a copy of CDC's draft report to your health care provider.

Learn about the diseases you are worried about: For example, see the CDC fact sheet "Where to go for More Information on Lung Cancer" or ask your health care provider for information on lung cancer and/or the disease you are worried about.

Attend the quarterly meetings of the Fernald Health Effects Subcommittee (FHES): The FHES is a formal advisory committee comprised of 15 area residents, health care providers, scientists, labor representatives and local leaders. Issues concerning the potential health effects from exposure to radionuclide releases from past operations at the Fernald facility are discussed at every meeting. To get on the mailing list of the FHES, call Steve Adams or Sharona Woodley at 770-488-7040.