

LUNG CANCER INFORMATION



Marie Keating

FOUNDATION

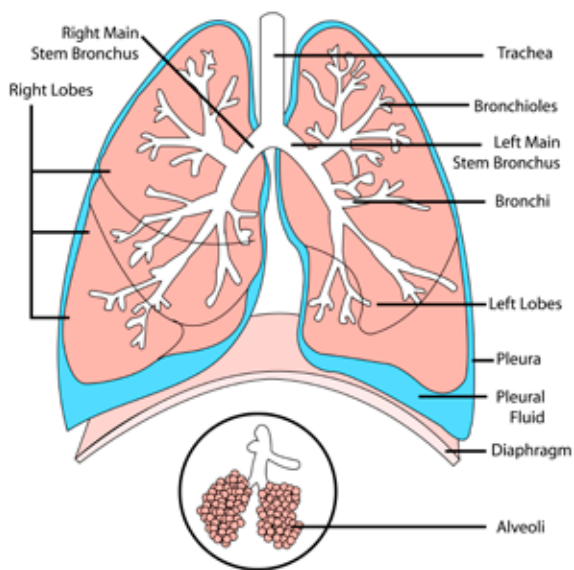
making cancer less frightening by enlightening

THE SIMPLE FACTS ABOUT LUNG CANCER

The lungs

The lungs are a vital organ in our body, located in our chest. These pairs of cone shaped breathing organs bring oxygen into our body and releases carbon dioxide. Each lung is made up of lobes. The left lung has two lobes and the right lung has three. A thin membrane called the pleura surrounds the lungs. Lungs are protected by the rib-cage. Beneath the lungs is a dome shaped muscle called the diaphragm, this works with the lungs allowing us to breathe air in and out.

Diagram of the human lungs



Risks and causes of lung cancer

Lung cancer is the fifth most common cancer in Ireland with an average of over 1,700 people diagnosed each year. Lung cancer in women is increasing every year and is predicted to overtake breast cancer as the leading cause of cancer related deaths in women.

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Smoking and lung cancer

- Smoking is the cause of most cases of lung cancer.
- The more you smoke the more likely you are to get lung cancer.
- As soon as you stop smoking the risk of lung cancer starts to decrease.
- Fifteen years after you stop smoking the risk of getting lung cancer is down to that of a non smoker.
- Passive smoking (breathing other peoples cigarette smoke) does increase the risk of lung cancer but it is still much less than if you smoke yourself.

Cigarette smoking is the main cause of lung cancer, although pipe and cigar smokers are more likely to get cancer of the mouth or lip, they are still more at risk of developing lung cancer than non smokers.

Other causes of lung cancer include:

- Exposure to some chemicals
- Exposure to asbestos
- Exposure to radon gas

Symptoms of lung cancer

- Having a persistent cough or a change in a long-standing cough
- Increasing breathlessness
- Coughing up blood stained phlegm (sputum)
- A chest infection that doesn't get better
- A hoarse voice
- Difficulty swallowing
- A dull ache or a sharp pain when you cough or take a deep breath
- Loss of appetite and loss of weight

How is lung cancer diagnosed

Most people begin by seeing their GP when they develop symptoms. Your GP will examine you and arrange for you to have tests or x-rays, you may need to be referred to hospital for these tests.

A chest x-ray will be taken to check for any abnormalities in your lungs. Lung cancer will often show up on a chest x-ray.

You may also be asked to give a sample of phlegm (sputum) to the hospital, so that it can be examined under the microscope for cancer cells- this is known as sputum cytology.

In addition a bronchoscopy and a CT scan may be used to confirm a cancer of the lung. In the bronchoscopy a thin flexible tube is passed down your throat and into the lungs to examine them. The CT scan uses x-rays to build up a three dimensional picture of the inside of your body. Your doctor may arrange for you to have one or more of these tests at the hospital.

Other tests that may be necessary include:

- MRI scan
- Mediastinoscopy
- Lung biopsy
- PET scan
- Ultrasound scan
- Isotope bone scan
- Lung function tests

Types of lung cancer

There is an important difference between primary and secondary cancer, primary lung cancer is a cancer that starts in the lungs. Secondary cancer is a cancer that has started somewhere else in the body for example the breast or bowel and spreads to the lungs.

There are two main types of primary lung cancer, small cell lung cancer and non-small cell lung cancer. The two types respond to treatment quite differently.

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Treatment for lung cancer

Your doctors will plan your treatment by taking into account a number of things including your general health and the size and position of the tumour.

The stage of the tumour is very important in determining treatment.

People with non- small cell lung cancer are offered different types of treatment depending on the stage of their cancer.

Surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy are all commonly used.

Chemotherapy is the main treatment for people with small cell lung cancer, it may be given on its own or before radiotherapy, sometimes chemotherapy and radiotherapy are given at the same time, this is known as chemoradiation.

Surgery is not usually used to treat people with small cell lung cancer, except if the cancer is found very early.

Don't be afraid to ask your doctor or nurse any questions that you might have about your treatment.

Who we are

Following their mother Marie's death in 1998 Ronan Keating and each member of the Keating family promised that they would do everything they could to bring an end to breast cancer. They committed to provide all women and their families with the necessary information to prevent cancer or detect it at its earliest stages. Their collective aim was "**making cancer less frightening by enlightening**". The Marie Keating Foundation is the realisation of a family's dedication-it is a promise to themselves in action.

Through its community information service our Foundation's dedicated nurses have enlightened thousands of people on the causes and risk factors on all of the key cancers. The Foundation is continuing to expand its awareness campaigns on each of the key cancers, at local level through its community outreach approach as well as through national campaigns.

The Foundation finances other areas of need in cancer care. Monies raised to help refurbish hospital oncology waiting rooms in making them more comfortable for patients. A limited comfort fund for those in financial difficulty as a result of their illness provides immediate assistance when required.

The Foundation is committed to raising awareness among young people in schools of cancer and its prevention and to this end, has successfully developed a Cancer Awareness Programme for schools, which will be delivered to all second level senior cycle students.

During its time in operation, the Marie Keating Foundation has become well established and faces a wealth of opportunities.

On February 2nd 1998, our mother Marie died from breast cancer. At the time and all through her illness, we could do nothing to help our mother who had, all our lives, done everything for us.

We, the Keating family have set up this charity in her name to try to help and prevent others going through what Mam went through and what we are still going through to this day. This is also to show that such wonderful mother and person did not die in vain.

Take care

The Keating Family



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