



Know the Signs of Lung cancer

Communication Toolkit 2025

This toolkit is for anyone who would like to help raise awareness and support our Know the Signs of Lung Cancer campaign. GPs, Pharmacies, Hospital Trusts, Community Trusts and ICBs are all welcome to utilise the information in this toolkit. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Background and statistics

Lung cancer is the third most common cancer in the UK. However, it has the biggest impact on people's lives in Wessex by causing the greatest disability adjusted life years (DALYs).

There are around 49,200 new lung cancer cases in the UK every year, that's more than 130 every day (2017-2019).

The majority of lung cancers are caused by cigarette smoke both primary and secondary smoking, but others will be because of occupational exposure to carcinogens or air pollution including exposure to Radon gas.

- 79% of lung cancer cases in the UK are preventable.
- 72% of lung cancer cases in the UK are caused by smoking.
- 5% of lung cancer cases in the UK are caused by ionising radiation.
- 13% of lung cancer cases in the UK are caused by workplace exposures.
- 8% of lung cancer cases in the UK are caused by air pollution.

Each year almost half (45%) of all new lung cancer cases in the UK are diagnosed in people aged 75 and over (2017-2019).

Around 14,300 cases of lung cancer each year in England are linked with deprivation (around 6,600 in females and around 7,800 in males).

Survival

The rate of survival of lung cancer is very much dependant on at what stage the cancer is diagnosed. CRUK data for England between 2013 and 2017 shows the following breakdown:

Stage 1 - More than 55 out of 100 people (more than 55%) will survive their cancer for 5 years or more after diagnosis.



Stage 2 - Around 35 out of 100 people (around 35%) will survive their cancer for 5 years or more after diagnosis.

Stage 3 - Almost 15 out of 100 people (almost 15%) will survive their cancer for 5 years or more after diagnosis.

Stage 4 - Almost 5 out of 100 people (almost 5%) will survive their cancer for 5 years or more after they are diagnosed.

Finding lung cancer early, saves lives. That is why we are running this campaign to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms and when to seek advice.

Podcast for Primary Care

If you want to learn more about lung cancer, listen to this Podcast for primary care from GatewayC: <https://www.gatewayc.org.uk/podcast/lung-cancer/>

Know the Signs Campaign

Key message

Knowing the signs and symptoms of lung cancer could save your life.

Early diagnosis saves lives.

Signs and Symptoms of lung cancer:

The main symptoms of lung cancer include:

- a [cough](#) that does not go away after 3 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

See a GP if you have any of the main symptoms of lung cancer.

More information about signs and symptoms of lung cancer: [[Lung Cancer - Cancer Matters Wessex](#)].



Target Audience

Men and women aged 55 and over from areas of deprivation across Wessex.

Lung cancer can affect anyone with lungs, it is more common in smokers but non-smokers can get lung cancer too. This campaign is aimed at people who live in areas of deprivation, as it is known that incidence of lung cancer increases within these areas.

Suggested Web Copy / News:

Lung cancer is the third most common cancer in the UK, and it causes the biggest loss in healthy years of life.

We want more cancers to be diagnosed at an earlier stage, when treatment is more likely to be successful.

According to Cancer Research UK data, if found at the earliest stage (stage 1) more than 55% will survive their lung cancer for five years or more after diagnosis. At the latest stage (stage 4) this falls to 5%.

This is why we are raising awareness of the signs and symptoms of lung cancer so people know when to seek advice and speak to their GP Surgery.

72% of lung cancer cases are caused by smoking. Lung screening is available to people aged between 55 and 74 who have ever smoked.

You must be registered with a GP in an area where screening is available, and your GP records must show that you are a current or former smoker.

The screening programme is for people with **no symptoms**. If you have symptoms of lung cancer you must contact your GP surgery directly.

For more information, videos and useful links to further information, visit [Lung Cancer - Cancer Matters Wessex](#)

Engagement Events

To help spread the campaign message, there are several events planned in June where we will be engaging with members of the public to talk about the signs and symptoms of lung cancer and lung cancer screening. Please help promote these events in your area and encourage people to come along.

We will be joined by health professionals who can also help with long term conditions such as COPD and Asthma, as well as quitting smoking support.

All events are from 9am-1pm



Monday 23 June: Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital

Tuesday 24 June: Southampton General Hospital

Thursday 26 June: Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth

Find us at the main entrance foyer for each hospital.

Social Media Posts

Lung cancer is the 3rd most common cancer in the UK. Know the signs and symptoms to look out for. If lung cancer is found early there is more chance that treatment will be successful - [Lung Cancer - Cancer Matters Wessex](#)

If you have a cough that lasts for three weeks, or a long-standing cough that gets worse, it could be a symptom of lung cancer. Contact your GP. It might not be cancer, but it is better to know - [Lung Cancer - Cancer Matters Wessex](#)

Lung screening is available to people aged between 55 and 74 who have ever smoked. You must be registered with a GP in an area where screening is available, and your GP records must show that you are a current or former smoker - [Lung screening - Cancer Matters Wessex](#)

Useful Links

There are several websites with advice, support and information about lung cancer that you can use yourself, or signpost people to, if they would like to know more:

<https://cancermatterswessex.nhs.uk/lung-cancer/>

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/lung-cancer>

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/lung-cancer>

<https://roycastle.org/>

<https://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/conditions/lung-cancer>

Images/Posters

Please visit our [awareness campaign webpage](#) to download images for social media and a Poster to promote this campaign. **GP Practices and Pharmacies:** please contact us if you would like us to send a Poster and/or leaflets to you (see email in footer below).



Lung cancer is the third most common cancer in the UK



Videos

The following videos can also be used to help raise awareness:

- NHS video explaining the signs/symptoms of lung cancer: <https://youtu.be/glbmqYEf2ag?si=1R6tuV0neQf0rjzr>
- CRUK short video describing the symptoms of Lung cancer: <https://youtu.be/vkxDGK9gF9s?si=-kslet06j9KLBpZA>
- Macmillan Cancer support – What is Lung cancer: https://youtu.be/-BI5TVNm3OY?si=mDPV6mXloxFldP_5

Lung Cancer Screening

For all the information on eligibility and going for a lung screening appointment, please visit our dedicated webpage: <https://cancermatterswessex.nhs.uk/cancer-screening-and-prevention/lung-screening/>

We will be sharing details of the lung cancer screening programme at our engagement events.



Prevention messaging

There are a few things that can be done to help prevent lung cancer.

One of the biggest risks is smoking. There are numerous benefits to giving up smoking.

You'll notice some benefits within days or weeks:

- your sense of taste and smell improve
- you start to breathe more easily
- you have more energy

Reduced risks of smoking related diseases:

Longer term risks of cancer, lung disease, heart disease and stroke will be significantly reduced

- after 1 year, risk of heart attack halves compared to a smoker's
- after 10 years, risk of death from lung cancer falls to half that of a smoker
- after 15 years, risk of heart attack falls to the same as someone who has never smoked

You will also be less likely to develop type 2 diabetes, bone disease including osteoporosis, eye disease and dementia.

If someone would like to get support to give up smoking, please direct them to the following webpage where all the local Smoking Cessation Services are listed:

<https://cancermatterswessex.nhs.uk/keeping-yourself-well-and-cancer-free/>

Other ways to reduce your risk, include:

A balanced diet - Research suggests that eating a low-fat, high-fibre diet, including at least 5 portions a day of fresh fruit and vegetables and plenty of wholegrains, can reduce your risk of lung cancer, as well as other types of cancer and heart disease.

Exercise - There's some evidence to show that regular exercise may lower the risk of getting lung cancer, particularly in people who smoke or used to smoke.

Useful links on risk factors of lung cancer

View this link from Macmillan: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/lung-cancer/causes-and-risk-factors-of-lung-cancer>

CRUK also have information on the various risk factors:

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/statistics-by-cancer-type/lung-cancer/risk-factors>