

HEALTHY LIVING CHRONICLES

Lung Cancer Awareness



Tumors in the body start when cells grow and multiply abnormally. If these cells continue to grow, they can become cancer, which can grow out of control, invade other organs and spread to other parts of the body.

Lung cancer is responsible for the greatest number of cancer deaths in the U.S., although it is the second most common type of cancer for both men and women. According to the database of the U.S. SEER¹ – an authoritative source for cancer statistics in the United States – about 234,030 people will be diagnosed with lung cancer in 2018 in the United States. Maryland and Prince George's County have an average number of lung cancer cases for their population sizes.

There are two main types of lung cancer: non-small cell lung cancer and small-cell lung cancer. Non-small cell tumors make up about 85 percent of lung cancers. Both types of cancer can be detected on CT scans and diagnosed with a biopsy. Non-small cell lung cancer has a higher chance of being detected at an earlier stage, and therefore may be treated by surgery, and/or chemotherapy and radiation. Small cell lung cancer is often detected later, when it has already spread. Therefore, it is more often treated with chemotherapy alone. Another type of tumor found in the lung is carcinoids, which typically grow less rapidly.

The most important risk factor for developing lung cancer is smoking and second-hand smoke. The amount of smoking and number of years of smoking are both important factors that affect the risk of getting lung cancer. Some of the other risk factors that can affect your chances of getting lung cancer include:

- ✚ Exposure to radon, asbestos and radiation
- ✚ Air pollution
- ✚ Family history

“The earlier we detect lung cancer, the better the chance we can cure it with the treatments we have available,” said Dr. Tiffany Schatz, Doctors Community Surgical Associates. Lung cancer screening is an important tool that helps to identify lung tumors before a person starts developing symptoms. Lung cancer screening is a low-dose CT scan that is done for patients who are between 55-75 years old and have a significant history of smoking. It has been found to decrease the risk of dying from lung cancer by 20 percent.

When lung cancer continues to grow, symptoms develop. Once symptoms develop that may be related to lung cancer, it's very important to be further evaluated by a doctor. These symptoms include:



- ✦ Coughing, especially a new and persistent cough that is either dry or produces putum (phlegm)
- ✦ Coughing up blood
- ✦ Shortness of breath that is new or worsening
- ✦ Chest pains
- ✦ Voice change or hoarseness
- ✦ Weight loss, change of appetite and fatigue, which are general warning signs and not specifically related to lung cancer

that incorporates regular exercise and a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can lower your overall cancer risk. Again, talk with your doctor immediately if you experience any of the above mentioned symptoms or if you think you may be a candidate for lung cancer screening.

If you have any questions about lung cancer, contact our Thoracic Surgery Program at 240-965-4405 or visit DCHweb.org/thoracic.

In addition to not using tobacco products, a lifestyle

Sources:
 American Lung Association: <http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/research/monitoring-trends-in-lung-disease/state-of-lung-cancer/states/MD.html>
 American Cancer Society: <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/lung-cancer/prevention-and-early-detection/prevention.html>
¹ The Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program provides information on cancer statistics as an effort to reduce the cancer burden among the U.S. population. SEER is supported by the Surveillance Research Program (SRP) in NCI's Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences. (DCCPS).

About Doctors Community Health System

Your body is a complex system. Each part has an important role in supporting your well-being. The same is true at Doctors Community Health System. Our network of care can help you maintain and improve your overall health. So, let our system care for yours.

At the heart of this system is our flagship – **Doctors Community Hospital** in Lanham, Maryland. For your convenience, we complement the hospital's medical and surgical programs with more than a dozen centers of care located throughout the area:

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| ✦ Ambulatory Surgery | ✦ Orthopedic Services |
| ✦ Bariatric and Weight Loss Program | ✦ Primary Care and Family Medicine |
| ✦ Breast Health | ✦ Radiation Oncology |
| ✦ Diabetes Education | ✦ Rehabilitation Program |
| ✦ Digestive Disease Care | ✦ Sleep Care |
| ✦ Emergency Services | ✦ Surgical Services |
| ✦ Endocrinology and Diabetes Care | ✦ Wellness Center |
| ✦ Imaging Services | ✦ Wound Care |
| ✦ Infusion Care | |

Contact us for more information or to schedule an appointment.
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