

Lung Cancer Choices is a useful tool for anyone impacted by lung cancer, with the primary focus on the patients.



To improve the lives of patients and communities by empowering and educating them to be advocates for their own health.



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Your Treatment Team and What You Should Know

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Caregiver Choices focuses on the unique challenges of caring for someone with lung cancer and provides caregivers with tools and resources for the journey ahead.



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Your Treatment Team and What You Should Know

Lung cancer can cause a great deal of uncertainty, but there is a team of highly trained professionals who's job it is to help you with these difficult times.

The information in this brochure will introduce you to members of the cancer care team and provide a short list of questions to ask them about your treatment.

The Multi-Disciplinary Lung Cancer Team

MEDICAL ONCOLOGIST:

A medical oncologist is a physician who specializes in medical management of cancer with systemic therapy (chemotherapy, targeted therapy, and immunotherapy). You may encounter them in the outpatient clinic or in the hospital and it is important to find a medical oncologist that specializes in lung cancer. The medical oncologist reviews the medical history, pathology, tumor mutational status, diagnostic tests, and performs a physical examination. Treatment recommendations are based on this information as well as the stage of the disease, physical condition, functional status, and history of previous treatment for cancer. However, treatment of lung cancer varies from one person to another, and the type of systemic therapy prescribed will depend on the specifics of your disease.

Questions to ask your medical oncologist:

- Am I a candidate for chemotherapy?
- What type of systemic therapy will I receive and how long will it last?
- What are the possible side effects of the therapies?

RADIATION ONCOLOGIST:

A radiation oncologist is a physician who specializes in the use of radiation therapy to treat cancer. Their focus is to design a treatment plan and direct radiation therapy. Radiation oncologists work closely with an array of other health care providers including: radiation oncology nurses, medical physicists, radiation therapists, and dosimetrists. They will help you choose the most effective radiation therapy for your cancer.

Questions to ask your radiation oncologist:

- Am I a candidate for radiation?
- What is my treatment plan and how long will it last?
- What are the possible side effects of radiation therapy?

THORACIC SURGEON:

A thoracic surgeon is a physician who specializes in chest surgery, which includes the chest wall, mediastinum, lungs, esophagus and diaphragm. They perform diagnostic procedures and surgical treatment for patients with lung cancer. They may involve obtaining laboratory tests or specialized studies. Prior to treatment, they will discuss the options for surgery and be the primary physicians managing your care in the hospital after surgery.

Questions to ask your thoracic surgeon:

- Am I a candidate for surgery?
- What are the risks, benefits and alternatives to surgery?
- What is my recovery time in the hospital and at home?

PULMONOLOGIST:

A pulmonologist is a physician who specializes in diseases of the airway and lungs. If you are found to have a "spot" (or nodule) on your lungs on chest x-ray or CT scan, they may be the first physicians you will see in a consultation. Their focus is to help determined if the nodule is lung cancer and aid in obtaining a diagnosis, This includes performing various procedures such as bronchoscopy and biopsies.

RADIOLOGIST:

A radiologist is a physician who specializes in reading body imaging (x-rays, computed tomography (CT) scans, and positron emission tomography (PET) scans). They aid in diagnosis of lung cancer and can perform CT-guided biopsies of tumors.

PATHOLOGIST:

A pathologist is a physician who specializes in the anatomic, cellular, and chemical changes that occur with diseases. Their role in lung cancer is to provide a diagnosis by examining tissue under a microscope.

Your physicians may be conducting research to help advance the treatment of lung cancer, they may ask you to participate. For more information, please review Caring Ambassadors Program Clinical Trials brochure.

Mid-Level Providers

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT, NURSE PRACTITIONER:

Physician assistants (PA) and nurse practitioners (NP) are medical professionals who work as part of the care team both in the outpatient clinic and in the hospital setting. In addition to assisting with your treatment, they are great resources for information and can be a direct line of communication to your physicians.

NURSE NAVIGATOR/ SOCIAL WORKER:

A nurse navigator is a trained nurse who works with you, your family, and your local doctor to guide you through the patient care process.

A social worker is a healthcare team member with psychology training who helps patients deal with mental, emotional and daily living issues.

ONCOLOGY REGISTERED DIETICIAN:

An oncology registered dietician helps to address nutrition issues that become barriers to healing in treatment.