

# *Lung Cancer*

*Know how to stay strong*

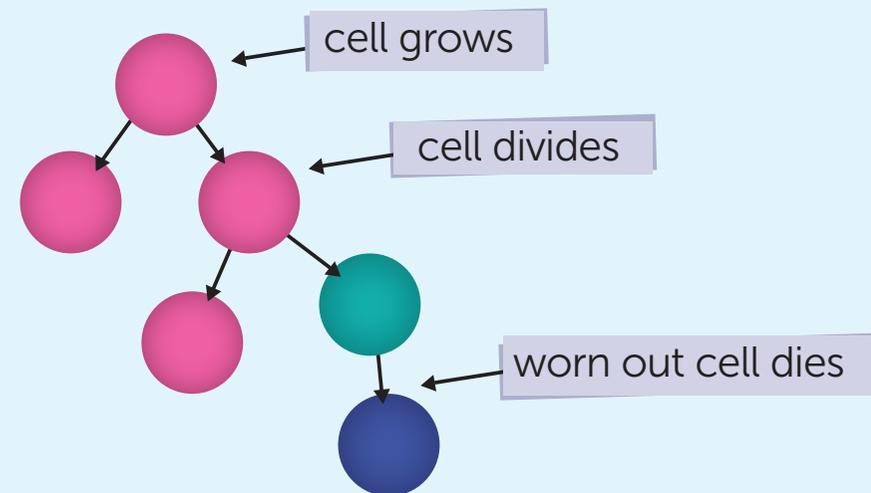


# *What is cancer?*

**Cancer is a disease “when some cells in the body grow out of control”**

## **Normal cells**

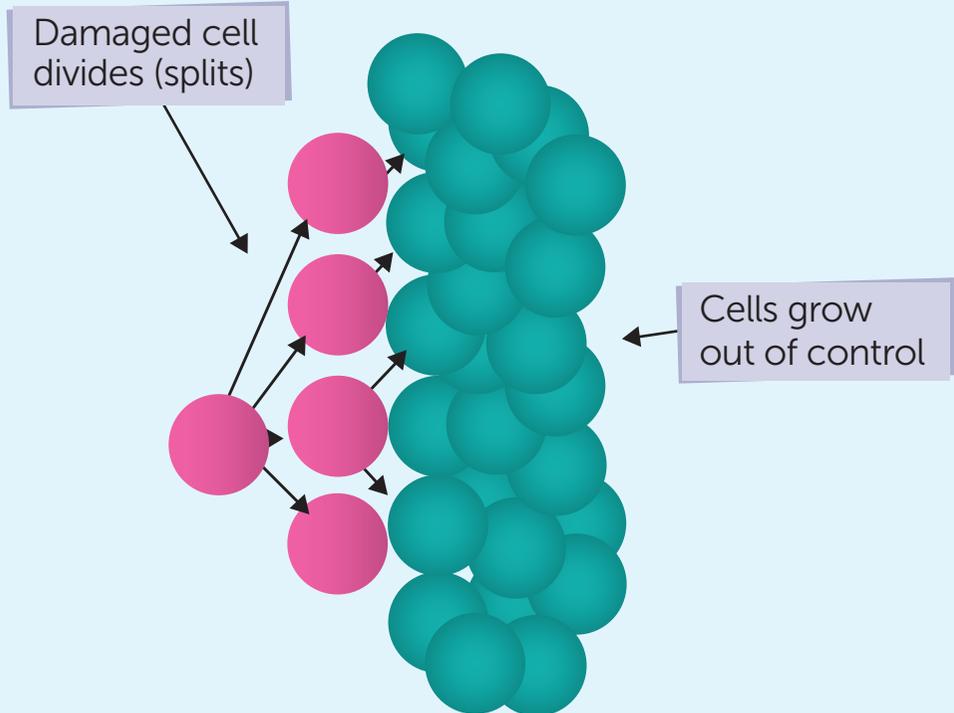
- Your body has many tiny cells and keeps making new cells to keep you healthy
- These cells are the building blocks that make up all parts of the body, including the lungs
- Normal cells in the body follow a path where they grow, divide (split) and then die
- When normal cells in the body get old (worn out) and die, they are replaced by new cells



# *What is cancer?*

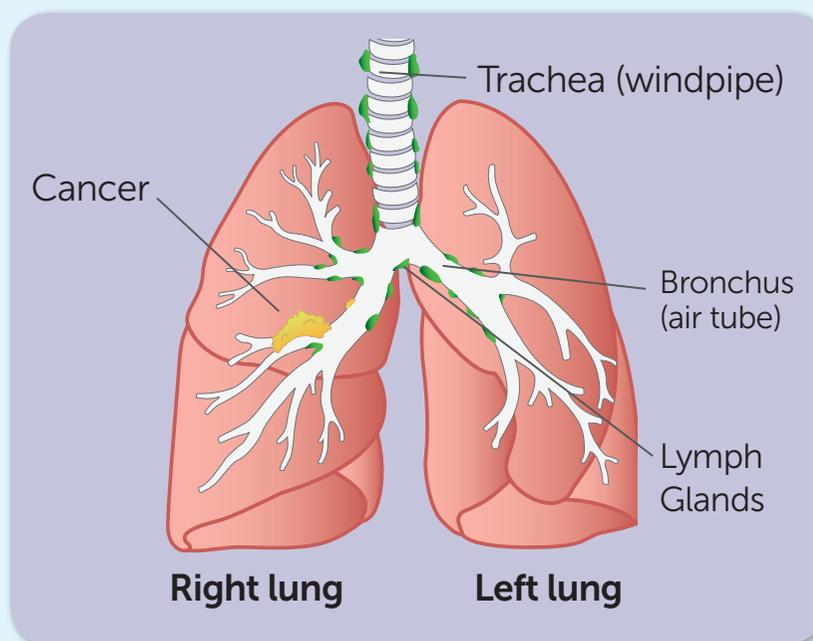
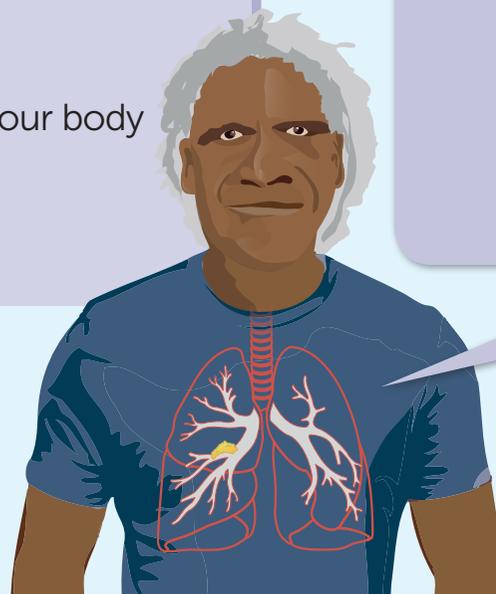
## **Cancer cells**

- Cancer cells are bad (damaged) cells that just keep on growing
- Cancer occurs when the body makes too many cells – more than it needs
- They can form lumps of tissue (tumours) in the body and can make you very sick



# Lung Cancer

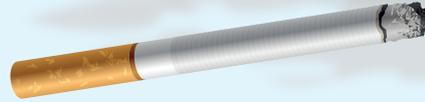
- Cancer can begin in any part of the body
- Lung cancer is a type of sickness in the lungs
- Lung cancer is the most common cause of cancer deaths in men and women
- There are several different types of lung cancer
- Primary lung cancer starts in the lung
- As cancer grows it can spread to other parts of your body
- Cancer which spreads to the lungs is called secondary cancer



# *Risks for lung cancer include:*



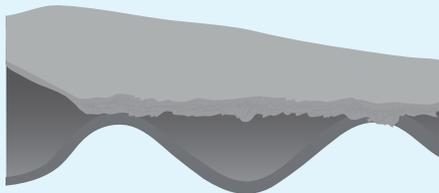
Older age



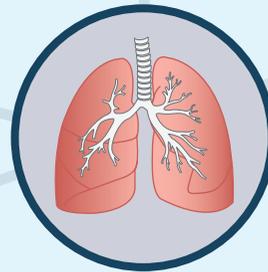
Tobacco smoking or exposure to smoke



Harmful chemicals such as diesel fumes and air pollution



Asbestos



Lung cancer runs in the family



Radiation

# *What can lung cancer cause?*

The effects of lung cancer depend on where it is and what damage it causes.

Lung cancer can cause:



Coughing up blood



Chest pain



Ongoing or change in cough



Short of breath

# *What can lung cancer cause?*

Lung cancer can also cause:



Feeling very tired



Swelling of your face



Pain in the back or bones



Hoarse voice



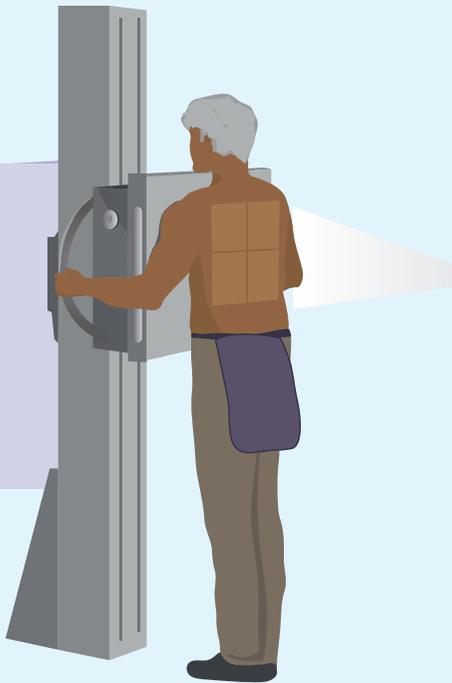
Losing weight

Many of the symptoms above can be caused by diseases other than lung cancer. When lung cancer starts, you may not feel sick and it can be found by chance.

# *Finding out if you have cancer*

If your doctor suspects lung cancer, they will do tests such as:

A **chest x ray** takes a picture of the inside of your chest, showing your ribs, heart and lungs



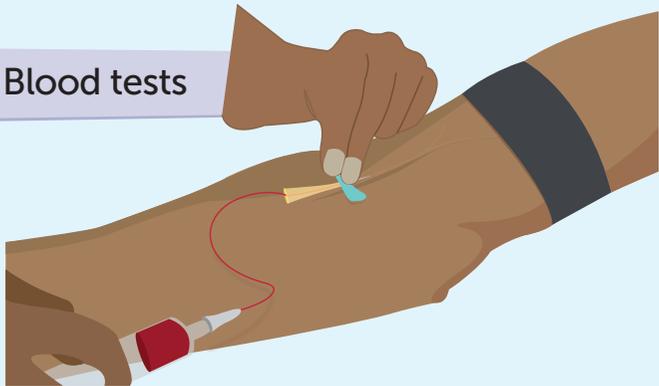
A **CT (Computed Tomography) scan** produces pictures of the inside of the lungs



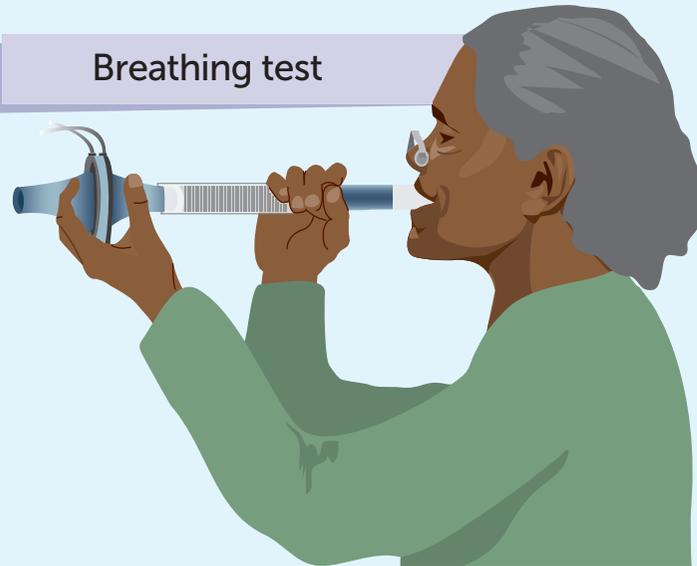
# *Finding out if you have cancer*

Other tests may include:

Blood tests



Breathing test



# Tests to find cancer

Usually a biopsy is needed to diagnose (confirm) the cancer



**Needle biopsy** is a test that takes a small sample of lung tissue with a needle



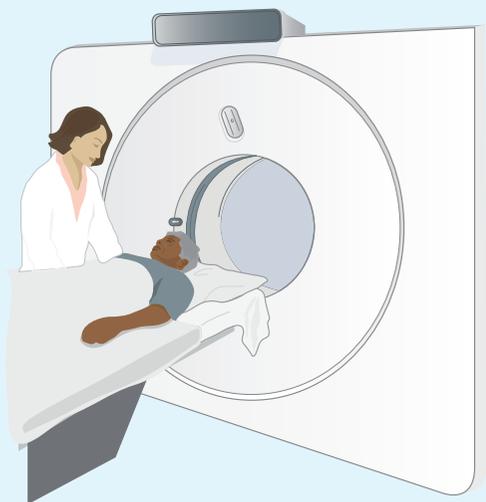
**Bronchoscopy** allows the doctor to see inside your breathing tubes with a small camera

It is important to ask questions if you are not sure of something.  
The doctor, nurse and other staff will be happy to answer questions.

# *Tests to see if the cancer has spread (Staging)*

If you have lung cancer, the doctor will usually do tests to check whether it has spread or not.

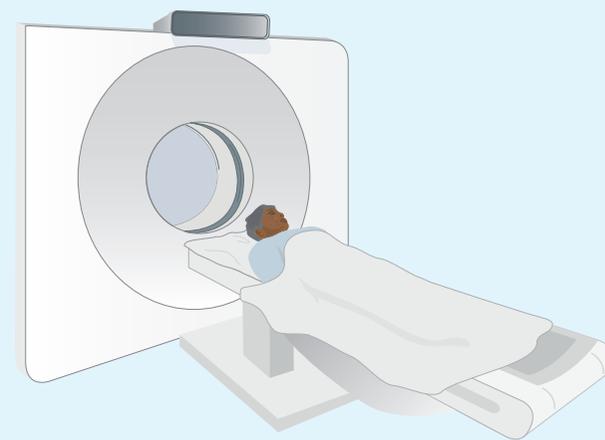
These tests can include:



**PET Scan** to look for cancer in the body



**CT Scan** to look for cancer in the brain



**Bone Scan** to look for cancer in the bones

# *How lung cancer is treated*

Treatment will depend on the type of lung cancer and where it is



**Surgery** is used when the cancer has not spread and you are strong enough for an operation



**Radiation Treatment** kills cancer cells with strong x-rays



**Chemotherapy** is treatment with medicines and tablets

Your doctor can give you more information and discuss the best treatment for you

# *How lung cancer is treated*



**Targeted Therapy** is a newer treatment often using tablets to treat some types of lung cancer



**Psychosocial care** helps to support the mind and spirit throughout your journey. No matter how you are feeling there are people who can help



**Palliative care** helps treat symptoms such as pain and breathing difficulties (short wind) and can be useful throughout the cancer journey

Please talk to your doctor, nurse or health worker if you have any worries

# *Benefits of treatment*

There is always something that can be done to help you



To make life more enjoyable



To help you live longer and give you the best chance of a cure



You will have a team of doctors, nurses, health workers and other professionals who know how to best look after you during your journey



To help control symptoms such as pain



# *Are there side effects from treatment?*

15



- Your doctor will work out the best treatment option with you for you and your family/carer
- Sometimes lung cancer treatment can make other things happen to your body – these are called side effects
- It is important to finish all your treatment to get better if you can
- Most side effects can be treated and will recover
- Please discuss any concerns with your doctor or nurse

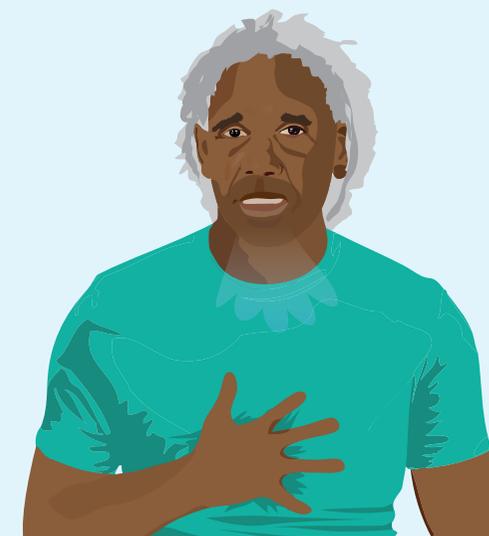
# *Possible side effects from surgery*



Pain



Temperature from infection



Short of breath

# *Possible side effects from radiation treatment*



Heartburn



Difficulty with swallowing



Feeling tired



Short of breath



Dry, red or itchy skin

# Possible side effects from chemotherapy



Not feeling hungry



Muscles feel weak



Loss of hair



Feeling very tired



Feeling sick and vomiting



Low blood count



Mouth ulcers



Bruising



Infection



Constipation (hard poos) or diarrhoea (watery poos)

# *If you have lung cancer, look after yourself*



If you smoke, please stop!



Take all medicines given by the doctor



If you require oxygen, be sure you know how to use it and who to call with questions. You cannot smoke if you need oxygen



Keep appointments with your doctor and health care team



Ask your doctor if you should see other doctors or specialists



Follow any special diet directions. If you have problems with your appetite, ask your doctor for help

# *If you have lung cancer, look after yourself*



Keep a healthy body by eating the right foods



Sleep as your body needs it



Do as much physical activity as your body can handle



Speak with community Elders or your support person to keep a healthy mind and spirit



Speak with your local health worker or nurse for information and support



# *Health of the family*

21



- Our family is very important to us. They may need help to understand what is happening to support you
- Lung cancer is a journey that affects everyone who loves you. Have a yarn with your health worker, nurse or doctor if you or your family have any questions
- When we are sick our family can worry and may not know what they can do to help. There are services in the community that can help you
- Your community is important in the lung cancer journey and can help you and your family stay strong
- Knowing about this type of lung cancer and how to care for you and your family, with the support of your Elders and community can make you stronger in mind, body and spirit

# Health of the family



Your family should talk about any concerns or fears they may have with the health worker and nurse or doctor



Eat a healthy diet to maintain energy levels



Talking to a health worker or other support person can help keep your mind and spirit strong

## Ways your family can look after their own health



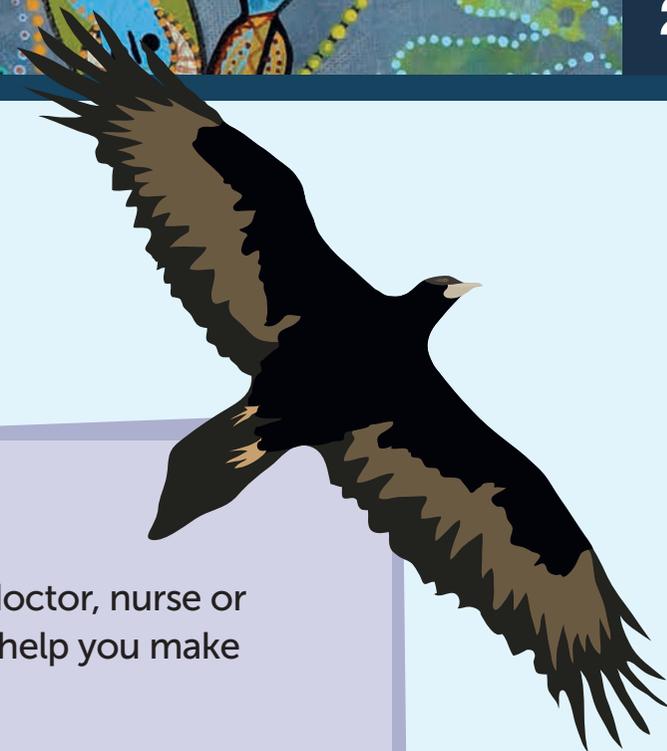
Keep an active social life



Exercise regularly



Get the right amount of sleep to get a good rest



## Stay strong

Every patient and patient journey is different. Please speak with your doctor, nurse or health worker about your journey. We hope that this information will help you make the right decisions for you and your family

For more information about lung cancer please contact:

- Lung Foundation Australia by phone 1800 654 301 or visit their website at [www.lungfoundation.com.au](http://www.lungfoundation.com.au)
- Cancer Australia – visit their website at <http://canceraustralia.gov.au>
- Cancer Council Australia at [www.cancer.org.au](http://www.cancer.org.au) or Cancer Council Queensland by phone 13 11 20 or visit their website at [www.cancerqld.org.au](http://www.cancerqld.org.au)



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24

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**Lung Foundation Australia**,

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