

# Lung cancer

If lung cancer is found and treated early, you have a good chance of getting better.

## What is lung cancer?

- Lung cancer is a growth that starts in the tissue of one or both of the lungs.
- There are different types of lung cancer depending on which cells are affected:
  - non-small cell lung cancer (most common)
  - small cell lung cancer (less common).

## How will I know I have lung cancer?

You can have lung cancer without noticing anything is wrong. Warning signs may include:

- new cough or change in a cough you've had for a long time
- feeling out of breath
- pain in the chest when coughing or taking a deep breath
- coughing or spitting up blood.

If you have any of these problems, see your doctor. You will have some tests to work out if you have lung cancer.

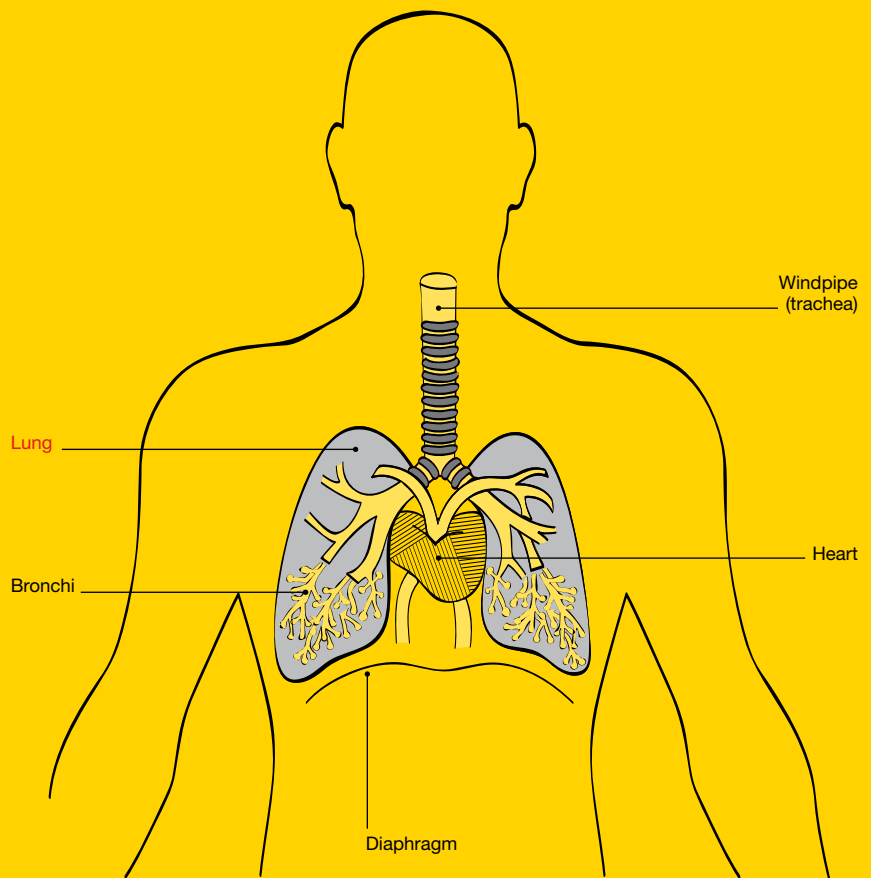
## What do the test results mean?

The test results will tell the doctor what type of lung cancer you have, and if the cancer has spread (the stage). This information helps the doctors decide what treatment you need.

**LUNG CANCER**

**The lungs and the respiratory system**

The picture below shows the lungs. The two lungs are part of the respiratory system – the part of the body that helps you breathe.



**Windpipe (trachea)**

This tube joins the voice box to the bronchi in the lungs. It brings air into the lungs.

**Bronchi**

These are found at the end of the lungs, and carry air into the lungs.

**Lungs**

You have two lungs. They take oxygen in and out of the body.

**Diaphragm**

This sits below the lungs. The diaphragm works with your lungs to help you breathe in (inhale) and breathe out (exhale) air.

**Heart**

The heart sends blood around your body. It sits between your two lungs.

**LUNG CANCER**

**What treatment will I need?**

There are different types of treatment for lung cancer. You may have one or more of these treatments:

- **Surgery** – removes the affected part of the lung (lobectomy) or an entire lung (pneumonectomy)
- **Chemotherapy** – uses drugs to kill or injure the cancer cells
- **Radiotherapy** – uses x-rays to kill or injure cancer cells

**How will the treatment affect my body?**

Surgery for lung cancer can cause pain and some trouble breathing. Your doctor or nurse will talk to you about how to cope at home.

After chemotherapy or radiotherapy, some people feeling like vomiting or are sick. Your mouth might feel sore and you may lose your hair.

**How do I manage the cancer?**

It is normal for you and your family to have lots of different feelings right now. Talking with your doctor, nurse or health care professional will help answer any questions you may have.

Depending on where you live, you might need to travel for treatment. You can get help to pay for travel and accommodation.

**For more information**

- Call Cancer Council 13 11 20
- Visit [www.cancercouncil.com.au](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au)
- Visit [www.menzies.edu.au/cancer](http://www.menzies.edu.au/cancer)
- For current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cancer-related statistics, see [www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)

*This information has been adapted for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by Menzies School of Health Research in consultation with a Clinical Advisory Group and an Indigenous Consultation group. Production by Cancer Council.*