Lung cancer: the many guises

Lung cancer is the most common cancer in the world. More people the world over die from lung cancer than from breast, colorectal and prostate cancer combined.

Lung cancer is a complex disease

The two main types of lung cancer are non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) and small cell lung cancer (SCLC):

- **NSCLC**
  - Newly-tanned lymph node, or stage II, more than one tumor when local disease is involved.
  - When tumors have spread to other parts of the body.
- **SCLC**
  - Median survival rates are higher in SCLC than in non-SCLC.
  - SCLC is more responsive to chemotherapy but is difficult for tumors to spread to other areas of the body.

Notable risk factors for both NSCLC and SCLC include:

- **Smoking**
  - It's very rare for people to develop NSCLC or SCLC who have never smoked.
  - The only cause of lung cancer is smoking.
  - Smoking is, however, not the only cause of lung cancer.

5-year survival rates are common in both NSCLC and SCLC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lung cancer type</th>
<th>Survival rates</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSCLC</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCLC</td>
<td>10%</td>
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80% of all lung cancers are cases of NSCLC.

There is more to treatment than meets the eye

There are more than 10 different treatment options and combinations available for NSCLC and SCLC and their families suffering from the complex disease that is lung cancer.

Treatment options include:

**Surgery**
- Personalized choice, surgical NSCLC may be the only treatment used.

**Chemotherapy**
- Includes the use of drugs, including monoclonal antibodies, small molecules, vaccines and gene therapies.

**Radiation therapy**
- Includes a high-energy X-rays that can destroy cancer cells. SCLC is more responsive to chemotherapy but is difficult for tumors to spread to other areas of the body.

**Targeted therapies**
- Includes a group of treatments including monoclonal antibodies, small molecules, vaccines and gene therapies.

Lung cancer staging and survival

- **Stage I**
  - Tumor has not spread beyond the lung.
  - Patients survive 90% of the time for at least 5 years.

- **Stage II**
  - Tumor has spread to lymph nodes.
  - Patients survive 50-80% of the time for at least 5 years.

- **Stage III**
  - Tumor has spread to the region of the lung.
  - Patients survive 20-40% of the time for at least 5 years.

- **Stage IV**
  - Tumor has spread to other parts of the body.
  - Patients survive 10% of the time for at least 5 years.

References


