

# Lung cancer Facts and figures



Lung Cancer is the most common cancer in the world, with an estimated 1.61 million cases diagnosed in 2008. In the UK, around 39,000 new cases are diagnosed each year and it is estimated that, at any one time, there are 65,000 people in the UK living with lung cancer.

In the UK, lung cancer is the second most common cancer in men (after prostate cancer), with more than 22,500 new cases diagnosed in 2008. More than 17,500 women were diagnosed with lung cancer in 2008, making it the third most common cancer in women after breast and bowel cancer.

More than 80% of people diagnosed with lung cancer are over the age of 60.

## What causes lung cancer?

The link between smoking and lung cancer was established more than 50 years ago. It is known that smokers and ex-smokers have a particularly high risk of developing the disease: smoking and passive smoking cause 9 out of 10 lung cancers.

The more you smoke, the more likely you are to get lung cancer. But the length of time you have been a smoker is most important. Cigarette smoking is the main cause of lung cancer. Pipe and cigar smokers are still much more likely to get lung cancer than non smokers. Passive smoking (breathing in other people's cigarette smoke) does increase the risk of lung cancer, but there is a greater risk if you smoke yourself.

As soon as you stop smoking, your risk of lung cancer starts to go down. However long you have been smoking, it is always worth giving up.

In the past, lung cancer has always been more common in men than women. Now, as more women smoke, it is almost as common in women.

Although most lung cancers are related to smoking, 10% of people with lung cancer

have never smoked.

However, there are other factors that increase the risk of developing lung cancer disease, for example, exposure to chemicals found in the workplace or environment, such as: asbestos, radon, diesel exhaust fumes, synthetic fibres and many others.

If you were/are a smoker it is important to recognise that, although your smoking habit may have contributed, it may not be the only cause of the cancer.

## How many people survive lung cancer?

Lung cancer survival rates are higher the earlier the cancer is diagnosed. It is one of the most difficult cancers to treat and is often diagnosed in very late stages. Because of these factors, lung cancer has one of the lowest survival rates of any type of cancer.

The survival rates for lung cancer also depend on the type of lung cancer you have, the stage it is diagnosed at and the cancer treatment you are given.

Your overall health can also affect your outcome, referred to as your "performance status".

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Overall, of all the people diagnosed with all types of lung cancer in the UK at all stages, about 25% of people will live for at least one year after diagnosis. About 8% of people diagnosed will live for at least five years after diagnosis.

## How many people die from lung cancer?

More than one in five deaths (22%) in the UK are from lung cancer making it the most common cause of cancer death. In 2009, around 35071 people died from lung cancer in the UK. Worldwide around 1.38 million people died from lung cancer in 2008.

## Is lung cancer more common in certain areas of the UK?

In the UK, there is a higher incidence of lung cancer in Scotland and Northern England and lower incidence in Southern England, the Midlands, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Scottish men and woman have amongst the highest rates in the world, reflecting the high smoking prevalence, particularly in urban areas.

### This information has been taken from the following sources:

Office for National Statistics, Cancer Registration Statistics in 2008 (2010)  
StatsWales  
Northern Ireland Cancer Registry  
Information Services Division (ISD)  
GLOBOCAN, Cancer incidence and mortality worldwide 2008  
The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation—[www.roycastle.org](http://www.roycastle.org)  
Cancer Research UK—[www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)

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### The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation

is the only charity in the UK wholly dedicated to the defeat of lung cancer.

It funds research into prevention and early diagnosis, provides practical and emotional support as well as helping people to quit smoking.

A variety of patient-focused lung cancer information materials are available free of charge to people affected by lung cancer.

For further information and details of your local support services please call The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Helpline on:

**0800 358 7200**