

Lung Cancer - After Treatment [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 06/2014

ON THIS PAGE: You will read about your medical care after cancer treatment is finished and why this follow-up care is important. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

Each year, tens of thousands of people are cured of lung cancer in the United States. After treatment for lung cancer ends, your doctor will outline a program of tests and visits to monitor your recovery and to check that the cancer has not returned. This plan may include regular physical examinations and/or medical tests. In addition, ASCO offers [cancer treatment summaries and survivorship care plans](#) [3] for both small cell lung cancer and NSCLC to help keep track of the treatment you received and create a plan once treatment ends. During this period, tell your doctor or nurse about any new problem that lasts for more than two weeks.

People treated for lung cancer may continue to have side effects, even after treatment ends. Common post-treatment problems include pain, fatigue, and shortness of breath. Feelings of depression and anxiety may also continue after treatment, and fear of the cancer returning is very common. Often people feel that they have less support once treatment has ended and that there is less assistance available from their doctors, nurses, and other programs, such as support groups. Your doctor, nurse, and social worker can help you develop a plan to manage any problems that persist after treatment. Read more about [what comes next after cancer treatment](#) [4].

Nothing helps recovery more than [stopping smoking](#) [5]. There are many tools and approaches available. Be sure to get help from your family, friends, nurses, and doctors?it is difficult to stop on your own.

People who develop lung cancer are at higher risk for developing a second lung cancer. Your doctor will recommend scans to monitor for a recurrence, so any new cancer can be found as early as possible.

People recovering from lung cancer are encouraged to follow established guidelines for good health, such as maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking, eating a balanced diet, and having recommended cancer screening tests. Survivors of lung cancer who have smoked cigarettes in the past also have a high risk of heart disease, stroke, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis. Certain cancer treatments can further increase these risks. Even for those who don't smoke,

healthy lifestyle choices after cancer are important for overall well-being.

Many patients wonder if certain foods or nutrients can help keep a cancer from worsening or recurring. It is important to remember that many different foods and nutrients have long been studied, but finding a specific link between a food and cancer is difficult. Learn more about [the role of nutrition in cancer care](#) [6], and talk with your doctor to develop a plan that is best for your needs.

Moderate physical activity can help rebuild your strength and energy level. Recovering patients, even those using oxygen, are encouraged to walk for 15 to 30 minutes each day to improve their heart and lung functioning. Your doctor can help you create an appropriate exercise plan based upon your needs, physical abilities, and fitness level.

Learn more about the [next steps to take in survivorship](#) [7], including making [positive lifestyle changes](#) [8].

The next section offers a list of questions you may want to ask. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select Questions to Ask the Doctor, or you can select another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/lung-cancer/after-treatment>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/25394>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/24398>

[5] <http://www.cancer.net/node/28476>

[6] <http://www.cancer.net/node/24965>

[7] <http://www.cancer.net/node/22>

[8] <http://www.cancer.net/node/24583>