

Lung Cancer Treatment: Your Guide to Managing Side Effects



You may have side effects from lung cancer treatment. These side effects can vary based on the treatment you get. Common treatment approaches for lung cancer include chemotherapy, immunotherapy, radiation therapy, surgery, and targeted therapy. In many cases, more than one type of treatment is used.


Talk with your cancer care team about which side effects you need to watch out for and when to call them.

Tips for Managing Side Effects

The American Cancer Society (ACS) offers materials to help you manage side effects of lung cancer treatments. This information includes when to call your care team for help.

Click a side effect to learn more at cancer.org.

 Anxiety	 Fever	 Pain
 Bleeding	 Hand-foot syndrome	 Problems concentrating
 Constipation	 Heartburn	 Problems swallowing
 Cough	 Heart palpitations	 Rash
 Decreased appetite	 Insomnia	 Shortness of breath
 Depression	 Itching	 Swelling
 Diarrhea	 Joint or muscle pain	 Weight changes
 Fatigue	 Mouth or throat sores	 Wheezing
 Feeling discouraged	 Nausea and vomiting	



If you are taking targeted therapy or immunotherapy, side effects are often managed differently than they are for traditional chemotherapy. Some side effects may be determined by [lab tests](#).

Contact your cancer care team as soon as possible if you develop any new symptoms. If you are in a clinical trial, follow your care team’s guidance on managing symptoms.

Visit cancer.org/lungcancer to learn more about side effects and treatments.

[Non-small cell lung cancer](#)

[Small cell lung cancer](#)

Resources to Manage Your Care

- Use [these worksheets](#) to help track your side effects.
- Download these [templates](#) to help record your treatment history and guide future care.
- Learn about [late and long-term effects of cancer](#).
- Learn about the importance of [follow-up care](#).
- Take steps to help lower your risk of the [cancer growing or coming back](#).

Supporting Your Overall Health and Well-being

- Learn about the [benefits of good nutrition](#) to feel better and stay strong.
- Discover how to [stay active](#) at any stage of your cancer journey.
- Get tips on managing [physical activity](#) and [well-being](#).

ACS Programs and Services

- [Road to Recovery](#) – Rides to treatment
- [Hope Lodge](#) – Lodging assistance
- [ACS CARES™](#) – Mobile app for people with cancer and their caregivers
- [Search for local resources](#) – Find free or low-cost resources
- One-on-one guidance, call **1-800-227-2345** or visit cancer.org