



## What you need to know about...

### Causes of Lung Cancer

**Smoking** is the number one cause, responsible for 87% of lung cancers. There are certain groups of smokers that may be more likely to get lung cancer than other groups.

**Radon** is the 2nd leading cause of lung cancer, causing 12% of lung cancer deaths. Radon is a gas found in soil that can leak under building through gaps in the foundation or insulation. Radon is in 1 out of every 15 homes in Illinois. Smoking and radon exposure together greatly increases your risk.

**Secondhand Smoke** had been linked to 20,000 cases of lung cancer and 3,000 deaths each year in the U.S. Workers that don't smoke, but work in a place that allows smoking are more at risk for lung cancer.

**Air pollution**, specifically, the particulate matter found in air pollution causes lung cancer. Particulate matter are very small, microscopic, particles in the air that come from **diesel vehicles** and **power plants**. Risk of dying from lung cancer in the most polluted cities may be comparable to the risk associated with long-term exposure to secondhand smoke.

**Family history** increases the risk of lung cancer. If your parent, brother or sister had lung cancer, you are more likely to develop lung cancer, especially if they had lung cancer before the age of 50.

**Medical history**; having another lung disease, such as tuberculosis, chronic

obstructive pulmonary disease, pulmonary fibrosis or asthma, can increase your risk.

**Work-related** exposure to asbestos, uranium, arsenic and certain petroleum products is another leading cause of lung cancer. Smoking and work related exposure together increases your risk.

There are many things you can do to reduce your risk of developing lung cancer:

- If you smoke, quit. Get resources and tips to help you quit on our website.
- Test your home for radon. There are simple, inexpensive test kits you can use to check for radon in your home.
- Avoid secondhand smoke. Make your home and car smoke-free. Encourage co-workers and family members to quit. Advocate for smoke-free environments.
- Eat a healthy diet. Fruits and vegetables may help prevent cancer. Visit [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov).
- Advocate for clean air policies in your community.
- Talk to your doctor about your risks. Early diagnosis is your best chance of success.
- Join the RHAMC's Lung Cancer Initiative and stay informed.
- Advocate for more lung cancer research funding. Lung cancer receives far less research funding than other leading cancers.
- At work, use the protective equipment required by your employer.