



Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer

Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) is the most common type of lung cancer, accounting for about 85 percent of all lung cancers. There are three kinds of non-small cell lung cancer, which include adenocarcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and large cell carcinoma.

Stages of Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer

NSCLC is divided into five stages to identify the best treatment options for each person. The stages are determined by the tumor size, location and spread.

Stage 0 – Tumor is small and hasn't spread beyond the inner lining of the lung. Treatment may include surgical removal or laser therapy.

Stage IA – Tumor is small and is only in the lung. It is less than 3 cm in diameter. Treatment may include surgery, radiation therapy or chemotherapy.

Stage IB – Tumor is only in the lung and between 3 and 5 cm. Treatment may include surgery, radiation therapy or chemotherapy.

Stage IIA – Tumor is small but has spread to nearby lymph nodes. Treatment may include surgical removal of part of the lung or radiation therapy followed by chemotherapy.

Stage IIB – Tumor is larger than 3 cm and has spread to nearby lymph nodes, or the tumor is less than 3 cm but is close to the airway or has spread to nearby areas such as the chest wall or diaphragm. Treatment may include surgical removal of part of the lung or radiation therapy followed by chemotherapy.

Stage IIIA – Tumors have spread to lymph nodes on the same side of the body as the original mass. Treatment may include radiation therapy, chemotherapy and/or surgery.

Stage IIIB – Tumor has spread to distant lymph nodes and tissue around the lung, such as the lining of the lung (pleura), breathing tube (trachea) or heart. Treatment may include chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy.

Stage IV – Tumor has metastasized to the bone or other body organs such as the brain or liver. Treatments may include chemotherapy or radiation therapy. Many clinical trials are in process to create new treatments that will improve survival.

Living with Lung Cancer

It is important to know you are not alone when you or someone you love is living with lung cancer. Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago's Lung Cancer Initiative serves as a resource for people living with lung cancer, their families, and friends and health care professionals.

A list of lung cancer support groups can be found online at www.lungchicago.org/lung-cancer-support.