Having lung cancer

Know what to expect and where to get support

Getting help and support

Support circle
Living with lung cancer can be hard, but support from your family and community can help.
Your local GP, Aboriginal medical service (AMS) or Aboriginal health worker can help manage your care, and answer your questions about lung cancer.
They can also help with things like travel and accommodation, or finding local support.

Other support and information

- Cancer Council
  Call the information and support line or use the website for information.
  cancer.org.au
  13 11 20

- Lung Cancer Network
  Check out the website or call to talk to a lung cancer support nurse.
  lungcancernetwork.com.au
  1800 654 301

- Aboriginal Outlines
  It’s never too late to quit smoking. Call and ask for an Aboriginal advisor.
  13 79 48

- Canrefer
  Find cancer specialists and services.
  canrefer.org.au

- Support for carers
  Find information and support for carers through Carers NSW and the Care Gateway.
  carersnsw.org.au
  1800 242 636
  carergateway.gov.au
  1800 422 737

Useful contacts

- Cancer Institute NSW
  Find cancer specialists and services.
  canrefer.org.au

The artwork illustrated throughout this document reflects on the Cancer Institute NSW who work and share values with other networks to aim for greater knowledge, awareness and success of health services for Australian Indigenous communities.

Artwork by Dennis Golding.

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  canrefer.nsw.org.au
  1800 242 636
  carersnsw.gov.au
  1800 422 737

- Cancer Institute NSW
  PO Box 41 Alexandria, NSW 1435
  t +61 (0)2 837 4 5600  f +61 (0)2 837 4 3600
e information@cancerinstitute.org.au

cancer.nsw.gov.au
Preparing for treatment
Your specialist doctor works with a cancer care team. They will make a treatment plan for you, which your doctor will explain.

You can take family or other people to support you, or ask for an Aboriginal health worker to be there when you speak to the doctor.

Other things to plan for
When you have treatment, there can be some costs for things like medicines, parking, travel or accommodation.

Ask how you can get help to manage these.

What happens next?
Your specialist will arrange for you to start your treatment.

>> Types of treatment
You may need more than one type of treatment, or have a choice of treatments.
- Surgery: involves an operation to cut out the cancer.
- Radiotherapy: uses radiation to kill or damage cancer cells.
- Chemotherapy: uses drugs to kill or damage cancer cells.
- Targeted therapies: are other drugs which work against some cancers.
- Palliative care: helps to manage your symptoms so you can feel as well as possible.
- Clinical trials: test new treatments for people with cancer.

What is the best treatment for me?
Ask your specialist
- What side effects could I get?
- When will I get them?
- How can I manage them?
- When should I get help for side effects?
- Who should I contact if I need help?

Important
Talk to your cancer care team before you see any bush medicine. It might affect your treatment.

Hearing treatment
Your cancer care team
You will be cared for by a team of doctors, nurses and other health professionals. Talk to them if you have any problems.

When you have treatment, there can be some costs for things like medicines, parking, travel or accommodation.

Ask how you can get help to manage these.

What would you like to discuss with your cancer care team?
- What side effects could I get?
- When will I get them?
- How can I manage them?
- When should I get help for side effects?
- Who should I contact if I need help?

Important
Ask the doctor to explain anything you don’t understand.
Ask where you can get more information and support.

Finishing treatment
Your specialist will tell you what happens next, including:
- when to come back for a check-up
- whether you need any tests before your check-up
- how to manage any side effects you have
- what you can do to stay healthy
- what to look out for if the cancer comes back or gets worse
- how to get help if you need it.

Your feelings
You can still get support after you finish treatment.

Talk to your Aboriginal health worker or health care team if you need support.

Ask your specialist
- What is the best treatment for me?
- What does it involve?
- How will it help me?
- Are there other treatments I could have?
- Where do I go for treatment?
- How long will it take?
- What will it cost?
- Should I take part in a clinical trial?
- Can I see another doctor for a second opinion?
- Who do I contact if I have questions or problems?

Important
Talk to your cancer care team before you see any bush medicine. It might affect your treatment.

Cancer treatments are improving all the time. Modern treatments cause fewer side effects, and there are better ways to manage these.

>> Treatment side effects
Most people have some side effects. These can make you feel unwell but there are ways to manage them.

Tell your cancer care team if you have pain or any other side effects.

Advance care plan
You can choose to make an advance care plan. This describes the care you want in the future.

It helps your doctor and family know what you want if you are too sick to make decisions yourself.

Talk to your specialist
Your specialist will arrange for you to start your treatment.

What is the best treatment for me?
Ask your specialist
- What is the best treatment for me?
- What does it involve?
- How will it help me?
- Are there other treatments I could have?
- Where do I go for treatment?
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