

# LUNG CANCER myths

**MYTH Only people who smoke get lung cancer.**

**TRUTH:** Anyone can get lung cancer. Approximately **18%** of lung cancer patients have **never smoked** and **61%** have already quit smoking.

---

**MYTH Breast cancer kills more women than lung cancer.**

**TRUTH:** More women die from lung cancer than any other cancer. In 2019, it is estimated that of all cancer deaths in women **66,020** will be due to lung cancer and **41,760** from breast cancer.

---

**MYTH If I already have lung cancer, there is no reason to quit smoking.**

**TRUTH:** Quitting smoking can increase the success of lung cancer surgery, treatments and overall quality of life.

---

**MYTH Lung Cancer is a death sentence.**

**TRUTH:** With early diagnosis, the survival rate for lung cancer can be high. It is recommended that high risk patients be screened for lung cancer so it can be detected earlier.

---

**MYTH Since lung cancer is the #1 cancer killer, it must receive the most funding.**

**TRUTH:** Lung cancer claims more lives than breast, prostate and colorectal cancer combined, yet receives the least amount of federal funds per cancer death.

# LUNG CANCER

## risk factors

- **Cigarette smoking** (current or past)  
For smoking cessation help:  
[www.quitlinenc.com](http://www.quitlinenc.com)
- **Exposure to Radon** – Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer. Radon is a colorless, odorless gas. You can test your home for radon for a small fee. [www.ncradon.org](http://www.ncradon.org)
- **Exposure to secondhand smoke**
- **Air Pollution**
- **Family history**
- **Radiation therapy to the chest**
- **Occupational exposure**, such as asbestos, cadmium, arsenic, and diesel fumes
- **Personal history of lung disease**, such as Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, COPD



## LUNG CANCER INITIATIVE

of North Carolina

The Lung Cancer Initiative of North Carolina's mission is to save lives and provide support to those affected by lung cancer through research, awareness, education and access programs across North Carolina.

[www.LungCancerInitiativeNC.org](http://www.LungCancerInitiativeNC.org)

Sources: The National Lung Screening Trial Research Team, NEJM, 2011, American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2019. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2019. National Cancer Institute. Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results. SEER Stat Fact Sheets: Lung and Bronchus.