



## Lung Cancer Symptoms

Lung cancer can be diagnosed and treated in several ways. Each person's experience will be different. Good information helps people ask the right questions and make the right choices.

### Early lung cancer often goes unnoticed



Many people with lung cancer do not have symptoms until the cancer is large or has spread.

Symptoms can be different in each person, but may include:

- A cough that doesn't go away and gets worse over time
- A sore or a "rough feeling" throat
- Constant chest pain
- Shortness of breath or wheezing
- Lots of lung infections such as bronchitis or pneumonia
- Coughing up blood.

### Symptoms of a cancer that has spread



Some symptoms do not appear until the cancer has spread to other parts of the body. These symptoms may include:

- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite (not being hungry)
- Headaches
- Bone pain or fractures
- Blood clots.

### If you're still worried keep asking doctors about your symptoms



See your doctor right away if you notice any of these symptoms. Some people, unfortunately, go misdiagnosed for a long time because their symptoms are similar to other diagnoses such as pneumonia, allergies or a cold. If you feel that something is wrong, keep asking doctors about it.

**You know your body best and it could save your life.**

### Related content

[American Lung Association \(2016\) "What Are The Symptoms of Lung Cancer?"](#)

[European Lung Foundation \(2016\) "Lung Cancer"](#)

[Lung Foundation Australia \(2012\) "Better Living with Lung Cancer: A Patient Guide"](#)



## About Lung Foundation New Zealand

Lung Foundation New Zealand is a non-government organisation dedicated to promoting healthy lungs and early detection of lung disease (including lung cancer, New Zealand's biggest cancer killer). The Lung Foundation is devoted to supporting people affected by lung disease and provides a voice for patients and their families.

Lung Foundation New Zealand advocates on a range of issues, including access to more effective funded treatments, an increase in research funding and a commitment to making Aotearoa a smoke free nation by 2025.

## Support us

Lung Foundation New Zealand is an independent organisation and is reliant on support from fundraising events, donations and bequests. This resource has been produced as the result of generous support provided by members of the public.

If you or a member of your family would like to support our work we would love to hear from you. Together we can save lives by increasing awareness about lung health and early detection of lung disease. Please visit our website [www.lungfoundation.org.nz](http://www.lungfoundation.org.nz) or contact Philip Hope, CEO on (+64) 021 959 450 or [philip.hope@lungfoundation.org.nz](mailto:philip.hope@lungfoundation.org.nz)

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**Expert Review Policy:** Our information was checked for accuracy and clarity by cancer specialists. This resource has been approved by Medical Director & Associate Professor of Oncology, Chris Atkinson of Christchurch; assisted by Dr Greg Frazer, Respiratory Physician, Christchurch Hospital; Catherine Smith, Clinical Nurse Specialist - Lung Cancer, Christchurch Hospital; and Anne Fraser, Oncology Nurse Practitioner, Auckland City Hospital. Lung Foundation New Zealand writes in plain English. We review our information every two years so it is kept up to date.

Thanks to the American Lung Association and the European Lung Foundation for allowing us to adapt their resources for our New Zealand readers.

*This information sheet is one in a series produced by Lung Foundation New Zealand on lung disease, its treatment and related issues and is correct at time of print. It is designed to be used as a guide only; it is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical treatment. Please consult your family doctor or specialist if you have further questions relating to this information.*