

Section Seven: Living well with lung cancer

Tekiona Whitu

Te noho ora me te
matepukupuku pūkahukahu



Key points:

- Because lung cancer is strongly linked to smoking, many people with lung cancer, whether they have smoked or not, experience negative attitudes from others and sometimes themselves.
- It may be helpful know that:
 - as many as 15 percent of people with lung cancer have never smoked
 - other factors may cause lung cancer, including air pollution, asbestos and second-hand smoke
 - smoking was a normal part of life in New Zealand for many years
 - smoking is one of the most difficult addictions to give up.
- Finding ways to focus positively on your body - such as eating well, starting a new exercise programme, and making positive lifestyle changes - can help you live well with lung cancer.
- A counsellor can help you to talk about your feelings around the impact a cancer diagnosis can have.

- Hospitals throughout Aotearoa New Zealand have trained health workers available to support your spiritual, cultural and advocacy needs.
- Talk to your whānau doctor, or your local Cancer Society, about the support services available for you and your family.

Ngā kōrero matua:

- Nā te mea he kaha te hāngai o te matepukupuku ki te kai paipa, he nui ngā tāngata whai matepukupuku pūkahukahu e rongo ana i ngā waiaro korehanga mai ētahi atu, mehemea i kai paipa, i kore rānei i kai paipa.
- Tērā pea he pai te mōhio ki ēnei:
 - Tae noa ki te 15 ōrau ngā tāngata whai matepukupuku pūkahukahu kīhai rawa i kai paipa
 - Ara ētahi atu take tērā pea puta ai te matepukupuku pūkahukahu, tae noa ki parahanga hau, te papa kiripaka me te kai paipa whai pānga tuarua
 - Ko te kai paipa tētahi o ngā waranga tino uua rawa ki te whakamutu.
- Mā te rapu huarahi ki te arotahi pai ki tō tinana- pērā ki te kai pai, te tīmata i tētahi hōtaka korikori hou, me te mahi i ētahi panoni toiora pai- tērā ka āwhina i a koe ki te noho ora me te matepukupuku pūkahukahu.
- Ka āhei tētahi kaitautāwhi ki te āwhina i a koe ki te kōrero mō ōu kāre ā-roto mō te papātanga o tētahi whakatau mate matepukupuku.
- Ka whai ngā hōhipera huri noa i Aotearoa, i ngā kaimahi hauora kua whakangungutia ki te tautoko i ōu hiahia wairua, hiahia ahurea, hiahia whaitaua hoki.
- Kōrero ki tō tākuta whānau, ki tō Kahui Matepukupuku i tō rohe mō ngā ratonga tautoko e wātea ana ki a koe me tō whānau.

Negative attitudes to lung cancer

Because lung cancer is strongly linked to smoking, many people with lung cancer, whether they have smoked or not, experience negative attitudes from others and sometimes themselves.

This can be hard to cope with and you may feel less like talking about your diagnosis and asking for support.

If you are feeling this way, finding someone you trust to talk to (like a friend or family member) may be a good first step. Sometimes, talking with a counsellor can help you to see a way forward.



You can phone the Cancer Information Helpline (0800 CANCER 226 237) for information about services in your area.

It may be helpful know that:

- as many as 15 percent of people with lung cancer have never smoked
- other factors may cause lung cancer, including air pollution, asbestos and second-hand smoke
- smoking was a normal part of life in New Zealand for many years
- smoking is one of the most difficult addictions to give up.

Adjusting to changes in body image, keeping active and eating well

Finding ways to focus positively on your body - such as eating well, starting a new exercise programme like yoga, and making positive lifestyle changes can help you live well with lung cancer.

Keeping active will help you to maintain a healthy weight and can reduce stress and tiredness. It also helps to keep your bones strong and your heart healthy.



You can find more information on living well with cancer on our website: cancer.org.nz/living-with-cancer

Finding support

For some people, meeting others in a similar situation can help decrease feelings of anxiety, isolation or fear. Support groups offer you the opportunity to share your experiences and learn different ways of dealing with problems.

The Cancer Society offers support groups that you may find helpful.



You can phone the Cancer Information Helpline (0800 CANCER 226 237) for further information.

Counselling

A counsellor can help you to talk about your feelings around the impact a cancer diagnosis can have, and help you work on healthy coping strategies.

To find a counsellor, talk to your GP or whānau doctor, your local Cancer Society or your treatment team.



You can find more information on counselling on our website: cancer.org.nz/emotions-and-cancer

Cultural and spiritual support

Hospitals throughout Aotearoa New Zealand have trained health workers available to support your spiritual, cultural and advocacy needs. They may include Māori and Pacific health workers who will work with you and your whānau.

Hospital chaplains are available to offer support through prayer and quiet reflection. Community-based health workers at your local marae and Pacific health services may also be good sources of support.



You can find more information on cultural and spiritual support on our website: cancer.org.nz/spirituality-and-cancer

How families/whānau can help

As a friend or whānau member of someone diagnosed with lung cancer, you are also learning to cope with your own feelings and emotions. You may want to help but may not know what to do. Here are some suggestions that might be useful:

- Learn about lung cancer and its treatment. This will help you to understand what the person you are supporting is coping with.
- Be thoughtful about offering advice. Listening while they talk or just being there with them are good ways to show you care.
- Talk about your feelings together and be honest about what worries you.
- Offer to go to appointments with them. You can be there for support, take notes or, when appropriate, take part in the discussions.
- Respect that your whānau member or friend may want to talk to their treatment team alone.



The Cancer Society offers a range of resources to support you. For more information on how families/whānau can help, see the Cancer Society's *Supporting Someone with Cancer* booklet, available on our website: cancer.org.nz/supporting-someone-with-cancer

We also have an online tool - Support Crew - to help you coordinate offers of help such as meals, childcare, cleaning. You can also use it as a secure online channel to send updates to whānau members and friends. This is free to use.



For more information: www.supportcrew.co.nz

Questions you may wish to ask

When you hear you have lung cancer, you and your whānau may have many questions. Here is a list of questions you may want to ask to help you make the most of your time with your doctor.

Let your doctor know if there are things you do not want to be told.

- What type of lung cancer do I have?
- How far has my cancer spread? What stage is it?
- What scans and tests do I need?
- What treatment do you advise for my cancer and why?
- Are there any private treatments available that you would advise for my cancer and why?
- Are there other treatment choices for me?
- What are the risks and possible side effects of each treatment?
- Will I have to stay in hospital, or will I be treated as an outpatient?
- How long will the treatment take?
- How much will it affect what I can do?
- How much will the treatment cost?
- If I need further treatment, what will it be like and when will it begin?
- How often will my check-ups be and what will they involve?
- Are there any problems I should watch out for?
- If I choose not to have treatment either now or in the future, what services are available to help me?
- When can I return to work?
- When can I drive again?
- Will the treatment affect my sexual relationships?
- Is my cancer hereditary (passed on by my parents)?
- Is the treatment attempting to cure the disease or not?
- What is my prognosis (future outlook)?
- I would like to have a second opinion. Can you refer me to someone else?

If there are answers you do not understand, feel comfortable saying:

- “Can you explain that again?”
- “I’m not sure what you mean.”
- “Could you draw a diagram or write it down?”



For more information, see the Cancer Society’s *Questions You May Wish to Ask* booklet, which has general questions and spaces in which you or your doctor can write answers. You can also phone the Cancer Information Helpline (0800 CANCER 226 237) for further information or visit our website: cancer.org.nz/questions-to-ask