

# LUNG CANCER

## Risk Factors

**What is a risk factor?** A risk factor is anything that increases your chances of getting a disease, such as cancer.

Different cancers have different risk factors. Some risk factors, like smoking, can be changed. Others, like a person's age or family history, can't be changed.

But having a risk factor, or even several, does not mean that you will get the disease. And some people who get the disease may have few or no known risk factors.

Several risk factors can make you more likely to develop lung cancer. These factors are related to the risk of lung cancer in general.



### Risk Factors That Can Be Changed

- Tobacco smoke
- Secondhand smoke
- Exposure to radon
- Exposure to asbestos
- Exposure to other cancer-causing agents

### Risk Factors That Can't Be Changed

- Previous radiation to the lungs
- Previous exposure to air pollution
- Personal or family history of lung cancer

### Factors with uncertain or unproven effects on lung cancer risk

- Smoking marijuana
- E-cigarettes

Talk with your doctor to understand your risk, or visit [acscancerrisk360.cancer.org](https://acscancerrisk360.cancer.org) to learn more about what you can change to improve your health and lower your cancer risk.

Source: American Cancer Society, 2025