



Dr Ian Watson

**Been coughing
for 3 weeks?
Tell your doctor.**

**BE CLEAR
ON CANCER**



Dr Rosie Loftus

...about **lung cancer**

Lung cancer is one of the most common cancers in England. There are some 34,000 new cases every year. It kills more men and women than any other form of cancer.

Lung cancer affects people of all ages but is most common in those who are over 50. Although it is more common in smokers, around one in eight people with lung cancer has never smoked.

The risk of lung cancer gets worse as you get older, but finding it early improves the chances of successful treatment. So if you have had a cough for three weeks or more, it's worth visiting your doctor to be on the safe side.

...about how to **spot it**

You need to see a doctor straight away if you have been coughing for the past three weeks or more. Some of the other symptoms of lung cancer include:

- A cough that has got worse or changes
- Repeated chest infections
- Coughing up blood
- Breathlessness
- Feeling more tired than usual for some time
- Losing weight for no obvious reason
- An ache or pain in your chest or shoulder that has lasted some time.

...about how important it is to **see your doctor**

If you notice any of these symptoms, tell your doctor right away. Detecting lung cancer early makes it easier to treat, so seeing your doctor quickly may save your life. It's probably nothing serious but it could also be a sign of something else that needs treatment.

So, don't ignore the symptoms or put off a trip to the doctor. It can make the world of difference and you won't be wasting anyone's time.

And if you know anyone who has any of these symptoms, insist they see their doctor. Again, it's probably nothing serious, but they should get it checked out.

...about your visit to the doctor

You can find your doctor's contact details at
[nhs.uk/lungcancer](https://www.nhs.uk/lungcancer)

Your doctor will ask you a few questions, like the ones below, and may suggest a chest x-ray. This is standard procedure and nothing to worry about. Taking an x-ray is quick and simple and doesn't require an overnight hospital stay.

Your doctor might ask you some of these questions:

- How long have you had a cough?
- Has your cough changed over time?
- Have you coughed up any blood?
- Have you had any chest infections recently?
- Have you been short of breath? For how long?
- Has your shortness of breath changed over time?
- Have you lost any weight?
- Have you had a pain in your chest or shoulder?
- Has this pain changed over time?

It may help to write down your symptoms and how you feel, so you don't forget anything on your visit.

...about how seeing your doctor early could save your life



When I had a cough that wasn't shifting, I went to my GP as I wanted to enjoy a holiday I'd got coming up. I was sent for an x-ray and told I had a tumour on my lung and needed an operation to remove it. No-one wants to hear they've got cancer, but it's much better to find out so it can be treated. I got given the all clear five years ago, and now I'm looking forward to my next holiday and the one after that.

Steve Duce, aged 63



I would urge anybody with symptoms that might be lung cancer, like a persistent cough, to go and see their doctor straight away. I'm glad I did. I was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2003 and I can still do all the things I did before my treatment, like long walks, swimming and spending time with my family.

Ann Long, aged 77

...about how to **reduce** your chances of getting lung cancer

Stop smoking

It's never too late to stop smoking. No matter what age you stop, it reduces your chances of developing lung cancer and makes a real difference to your health in general. There's plenty of support and help available from the NHS. Visit smokefree.nhs.uk or call 0800 169 0169.

Look after yourself

Keep active and you'll help keep your lungs healthy. That doesn't mean you have to join a gym. Swimming, cycling – the more you can do, the better. Even walking to your local shops instead of taking the car can make a difference.

Eat healthily

Try to get your 5-a-day. So eat more vegetables and fruit, fish, and wholegrain foods. Eat less fatty foods like cakes and pastries and fewer processed meats like bacon and ham. It's also a good idea to reduce your alcohol intake.

Unclear on anything?
Visit **nhs.uk/lungcancer**