



HOLY FAMILY
PARISH

PARISH NURSE MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

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November is Lung Cancer Month

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day...

2Corinthians:16

A cancer begins with an error, or mutation, in a cell's DNA. DNA mutations can be caused by the normal aging process or through environmental factors, such as cigarette smoke or breathing in asbestos. Researchers have found that it takes a series of genetic changes to create a lung cancer cell. Before becoming fully cancerous, cells can be precancerous, which means they have some irregularities, but can still function as lung cells. However, precancerous changes may signify progression towards cancer.

Primary versus Secondary Lung Cancer

Primary lung cancer starts in the lungs. Sometimes, people will have cancer from another part of their body travel, or metastasize, to their lungs. This is called secondary lung cancer because the lungs are secondary compared to the original, primary location of the Cancer. Secondary lung cancer is not lung cancer, but the type of lung cancer from its original site, such as breast cancer. Secondary will be treated differently than primary lung cancer because it is a different disease.

Types of Lung Cancer

There are two major types of lung cancer — non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) and small cell cancer (SCLC). These names refer to how the cancers look under a microscope to a pathologist. Most cancers are NSCLC. There are subtypes of NSCLC. Because different types of lung cancer are treated differently, your oncologist will determine exactly what treatment is best for you. Remember, no matter what type or what stage of lung cancer you have, there are treatment options. NSCLC accounts for 80% of lung cancers. SCLC accounts for 20% of all lung cancers. Although cells are small, they multiply quickly and form large tumors that can spread throughout the body. Smoking is almost always the cause of SCLC.

1. The most common type of NSCLC is squamous cell carcinoma. It forms in the lining of the bronchial tubes and is the most common type of lung cancer in men.
2. Adenocarcinoma is found in the glands of the lungs that produce mucus. This is the most common type of cancer in women and also among people who have not smoked.
3. Bronchioalveolar carcinoma is a rare subset of adenocarcinoma. It forms near the lung air sacs.
4. Large-cell undifferentiated carcinoma forms near the surface or outer edges of the lungs. It can grow rapidly.

Everybody should be aware of how his or her body normally feels and report any abnormal feelings to their doctor. A doctor should check anything that is worrisome. The signs and symptoms of lung cancer can take years to develop and may not appear until the disease is advanced.

Some Signs and Symptoms of Lung Cancer that are in the Chest

- ◆ Coughing, especially if it persists or becomes intense.
- ◆ Pain in the chest, shoulder or back unrelated to pain from coughing
- ◆ A change in color or volume of sputum
- ◆ Shortness of breath
- ◆ Changes in voice or being hoarse
- ◆ Harsh sounds with each breath (stridor)
- ◆ Recurrent lung problems, such as bronchitis or pneumonia
- ◆ Coughing up phlegm or mucus, especially if it is tinged with blood
- ◆ Coughing up blood

If the original cancer has spread, a person may feel symptoms in other places in the body. Common places for lung cancer to spread include other parts of the lungs, lymph nodes, bones, brain, liver and adrenal glands.

Information for this article is from several Internet sources. For more information, go to www.lungcancer.org and www.lungcancermayoclinic.org.

Happy Thanksgiving,
Your Parish Nurses

To contact Holy Family Parish Nurse Ministry call 330-688-6412 ext. 462 or view at www.holyfamilystow.org. For other articles, go to www.holyfamily.org and click on Parish Nurse Resource Topics.