

Kim Durst, American Cancer Society, Relay For Life

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**November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month -The Great American Smoke out is November 16<sup>th</sup>!** Encourage someone you know to use this date to make a plan to quit, or plan in advance and then quit smoking that day. When trying to quit smoking , support can make all the difference.

Lung cancer is by far the leading cause of cancer death among both men and women; about 1 out of 4 cancer deaths are from lung cancer. Each year, more people die of lung cancer than of colon, breast, and prostate cancers combined.

In the U.S. ACS is currently funding 88 research projects related to lung cancer, at a total investment of \$46 million. Lung cancer is a complicated subject, and we hope you'll take some time this month to learn more about it. A good starting point is [cancer.org](http://cancer.org).

If you or anyone you know would like help to quit smoking, call ACS at 1.800.227.2345 to learn more about the Quit For Life program. A collaboration between ACS and Optum, this leading tobacco-cessation program is a phone-based coaching and web-based learning support service to help smokers quit. It's offered by 26 states and more than 700 employers and health plans throughout the U.S.

Did you know that about 2 out of 3 people diagnosed with lung cancer are 65 or older, while 1.3% are younger than 45? The average age at the time of diagnosis is about 70. Overall, the chance that a man will develop lung cancer in his lifetime is about 1 in 14; for a woman, the risk is about 1 in 17. These numbers include both smokers and non-smokers. For smokers the risk is much higher, while for non-smokers the risk is lower.

While most people who get lung cancer are current or former smokers, never-smokers can also get lung cancer. More than 30,000 never- smokers die of lung cancer every year. Other causes of lung cancer include exposure to radon and secondhand smoke, air pollution, and exposure to certain cancer-causing agents at work. Secondhand smoke is thought to cause more than 3,000 deaths from lung cancer each year. If counted separately, lung cancer among never-smokers would be a top-ten cause of cancer deaths.

**The lung damage that leads to cancer can be repaired by quitting smoking..** Over time, there are many benefits to quitting smoking. Here are a few examples:

- 2 weeks to 3 months after quitting your circulation improves and your lung function increases
- 1 to 9 months after quitting coughing and shortness of breath decrease.
- 5 years after quitting our risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder is cut in half. Cervical cancer risk falls to that of a non-smoker. Your stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2 to 5 years.
- 10 years after quitting the risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking.

Most lung cancers do not cause any symptoms until they have spread, but some people with early lung cancer do have symptoms. If you go to your doctor when you first notice symptoms, your cancer might be

diagnosed at an earlier stage, when treatment is more likely to be effective. Some of the most common symptoms of lung cancer are: a cough that does not go away or gets worse; chest pain that is often worse with deep breathing, coughing, or laughing; weight loss and loss of appetite; coughing up blood or rust-colored sputum (spit or phlegm); infections such as bronchitis and pneumonia that don't go away or keep coming back.

Studies looking at the possible role of vitamin supplements in reducing lung cancer risk have had disappointing results. In fact, two large studies found that smokers who took beta carotene supplements actually had an increased risk of lung cancer. The results of these studies suggest that smokers should avoid taking beta carotene supplements.

The makers of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) say that the ingredients are "safe," but there are questions about how safe it is to inhale some substances in the ENDS vapor. ENDS cartridges are not labeled with their ingredients, so the user doesn't know what's in them. The amounts of nicotine and other substances a person gets from each cartridge are also unclear and have been found to vary greatly even when comparing same brand cartridges from the same manufacturer. When the solutions in ENDS are heated, they release acetaldehyde and formaldehyde – known toxins. The flavorings in the solutions may also be toxic. Studies have shown that e-cigarettes can cause short-term lung changes that are much like those caused by regular cigarettes. But long-term health effects are still unclear. This is an active area of research, but right now not much is known about the safety of these products. ACS is reviewing whether e-cigarettes have a meaningful place in tobacco cessation. **Bottom line:** ACS cannot recommend e-cigarettes and other ENDS products to help people quit smoking because it isn't yet known if they are safe and effective. There are proven methods available to help people quit, including pure forms of inhalable nicotine as well as nasal sprays, gums, lozenges, and patches. Until ENDS are scientifically proven to be safe and effective, ACS will support the regulation of ENDS and laws that treat them like all other tobacco products.

ACS has thoroughly reviewed the subject of lung cancer screening and issued guidelines that are aimed at doctors and other health care providers. Patients who meet ALL of the following criteria may be candidates for lung cancer screening:

- 55 to 74 years old
- In fairly good health
- Have at least a 30 pack-year smoking history
- Are either still smoking or have quit smoking within the last 15 years

Screening should only be done at facilities that have the right type of CT scanner and that have a lot of experience using low-dose CT scans for lung cancer screening. The facility should also have a team of specialists that can provide the appropriate care and follow-up of patients with abnormal results on the scans. [Visit cancer.org](http://cancer.org) for more details.

When someone you love is diagnosed with cancer, make sure they know where to turn for help – to learn more about the American Cancer Society or to get help please call 1-800-227-2345 or visit us at [cancer.org](http://cancer.org).

If you would like to get involved with the Relay For Life of Guthrie County as a team or be on the Event Leadership Team(committee) please contact the Relay For Life, Sr. Community Manager, Kim Durst at 641.757.0746 or [kim.durst@cancer.org](mailto:kim.durst@cancer.org).

Please join us for the 2018 Relay For Life of Guthrie County on **Friday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at a new location... the GUTHRIE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS!** More information on the event to come!

#GivingTuesday – the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving, November 28th – is a global day of giving, and we need your help to break through the holiday noise and donate to a cause that is making a difference. Go to [www.relayforlife.org/guthriecountyia](http://www.relayforlife.org/guthriecountyia). The American Cancer Society's mission is to save lives, celebrate lives and lead the fight for a world without cancer.