

Don't ignore symptoms

The symptoms of lung cancer can vary from person to person. If you experience any of the following, it could be time to make an appointment with your doctor.

Have you had a cough lasting a couple of months or more?

People don't usually keep a diary of when their cough started, but if you can't REMEMBER when it started, or if you think the cough has lasted for a couple of months or more, it's time to do something about it. Also look for changes in a cough that you have, does it get worse, sound different or 'hit you harder' when you cough?

If this applies to you, it is important to talk to your doctor so they can help figure out what's causing your cough.

Are you coughing up mucus, phlegm or even blood?

Many winter coughs or colds can produce some mucus or phlegm when coughing. But if this is lasting longer than you think it should, or is rust coloured, then this is worth checking out.

Or are you coughing up blood (even small amounts)?

Do you get out of breath more easily than you used to?

Do you run out of puff or start wheezing for no reason, or when doing normal things like walking to the letterbox? Do you find yourself avoiding some of your usual activities because you run out of breath? Breathlessness can be associated with poor fitness or getting older. However, it is important to recognise that unexplained breathlessness might be a symptom of something more serious, so it's important to get to your doctor and get it checked out.

Do you have wheezy breath?

Have you noticed changes to the sound of your breathing? Maybe you can hear a wheezing, whistling or fizzing sound from your chest when you breathe in or out?

Talk to your doctor if you are experiencing these symptoms.

Feeling more tired than usual?

Everyone gets tired now and again, but if you are constantly feeling this way it's worth investigating. There are many reasons and causes of unexplained tiredness, so it is a good idea to visit your doctor regardless of what you think could be causing it. This is especially the case if you have any of the other symptoms mentioned in this section.

Has your voice changed?

Have you noticed changes to your voice? Maybe it's become husky, or you lose your voice entirely? People who know you well might have commented on this.

Do you have any pain in your chest or have unexplained weight loss?

There can be a number of health conditions that can cause chest pain, and it isn't always related to lung problems. But it's important to figure out what's causing it. And if you're losing weight rapidly, that's definitely something worth discussing with your doctor.

Have you ever had exposure to dangerous substances like second-hand smoke, asbestos, dust or fumes?

Breathing in dangerous substances can increase your risk of developing lung diseases, including lung cancer. It is worth noting that you could have been exposed years ago, with health issues showing up later in life. Make sure you remember to tell your doctor about anything you think you may have been exposed to over the years (at work or at home).

Have you ever been a smoker?

It is important not to judge yourself about your smoking history. Whether you are currently a smoker or you quit years ago, it is very important to tell your doctor about it, especially if you have any of the symptoms mentioned in this list.
