

## **Patient Information Lung Cancer**

### **Respiratory Department St Woolos / Royal Gwent Hospitals**

This leaflet has been developed to help you understand your diagnosis and to answer some of the common questions about lung cancer.

#### **What is cancer?**

Cancer is a disease characterised by the uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells. Any malignant growth or tumour caused by abnormal and uncontrolled cell division can result in a growth or tumour which can invade and destroy surrounding tissue, and has the potential to spread to other parts of the body.

#### **What is lung cancer?**

Lung cancer is a term used to describe a growth of abnormal cells which can affect the air passages, air sacs, or both. You have two lungs in your chest, one on each side. The lungs are the organs in your chest that bring oxygen into your body.

There are different types of lung cancer. These are:-

- Small cell lung cancer
- Non-small cell lung cancer (this is the most common type)
- Adenocarcinoma
- Squamous carcinoma

#### **Can lung cancer spread?**

As previously described, lung cancer has the potential to spread to other parts of your body. Further investigations are sometimes needed to establish if the cancer has spread.

These results will help the doctors to decide on the best treatment for you. The results will take several days and this waiting period is a very anxious time for you. It may help if you talk things over with your relatives, a close friend or the lung cancer nurses.

## **What kind of treatment is available for lung cancer?**

This depends on the type of lung cancer you have, the site of the cancer and whether you have any other underlying diseases. Generally however, there are 3 main types of treatment.

The standard methods of treating lung cancer are surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy, which may be used alone or in various combinations.

**Surgery**, if appropriate, is done at the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff.

**Chemotherapy**, a drug treatment, is given at Royal Gwent Hospital or Velindre Cancer Centre.

**Radiotherapy** – x-ray treatment, is done at Velindre Hospital, Cardiff. Radiotherapy is also used at times to help symptoms such as a troublesome cough, shortness of breath, pain or if you have coughed up blood.

Some patients will be asked to participate in clinical trials (or research studies) designed to evaluate new approaches to treatment.

## **How will I feel?**

Being diagnosed with lung cancer can be deeply distressing for you and those closest to you. Many different emotions arise which can change your mood. Reactions differ from one person to another.

You may feel, shocked, frightened, and angry or you may not believe what you have been told about your diagnosis. These feelings are quite normal and there is no right or wrong way to feel.

## **How will it affect my family?**

They may be shocked and upset by the news and on times relationships can change. Those closest to you may be afraid to talk about cancer and feelings of depression, irritability and short tempers can occur, adding to the stress which you are all feeling.

Where children and grandchildren are involved, it may be best to gradually introduce them to the problem. Everyone will want to ask questions and it is best to be honest. Those closest to you will respond to how you are coping. Do not deny yourself the opportunity to express how you are feeling. Remember help is there for you.

### **Will I be in pain?**

This is a common question asked by people with cancer. One in three patients with cancer have no pain at all.

If pain is present, in most situations it is easily treated. It is important to tell your doctor or nurse if you do experience pain bearing in mind that you will be just as prone to headaches, muscle aches and other symptoms as you were before your diagnosis.

### **Will I be cured?**

This is an extremely difficult question to answer. This depends on many factors, such as your health in general, the type of lung cancer you have, the extent of the spread and if you are having treatment, how well your body responds to it.

Medical research takes place within this hospital. Any research that is suitable for you to take part in will be discussed at your clinic appointments.

### **Who are the people in the lung cancer team you may meet or speak to?**

Dr Ian Williamson    Consultant Respiratory Physician

Dr Alina Ionescu    Consultant Respiratory Physician

Dr Mick Button    Consultant Oncologist

Dr Paul Shaw    Consultant Oncologist

Dr Mitali Patel    Consultant Palliative Physician

Mr. Ainis Pirtnieks    Consultant Thoracic Surgeon

**Clinical Nurse Specialists**

Helen Howison, Sam Williams & Rebecca Weston-Thomas  
Lung Cancer Specialist Nurses  
01633 656149 / 238449

Tracey Davies  
Lung Cancer Nurses Administration Support  
01633 656149

Caroline Dalton  
Clinic coordinator  
01633 656227

Research Nurses  
01633 238536

**Other Useful Information**

Key Worker:-.....Helen Howison, Sam Williams, Rebecca Weston-Thomas  
01633 656149 .....

Your GP:-.....

Out of hours Doctor:-.....

Community Nurse:-.....

Community Palliative Care Nurse:-.....

**Personal Notes/Comments**

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**“This document is available in Welsh /  
Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.**