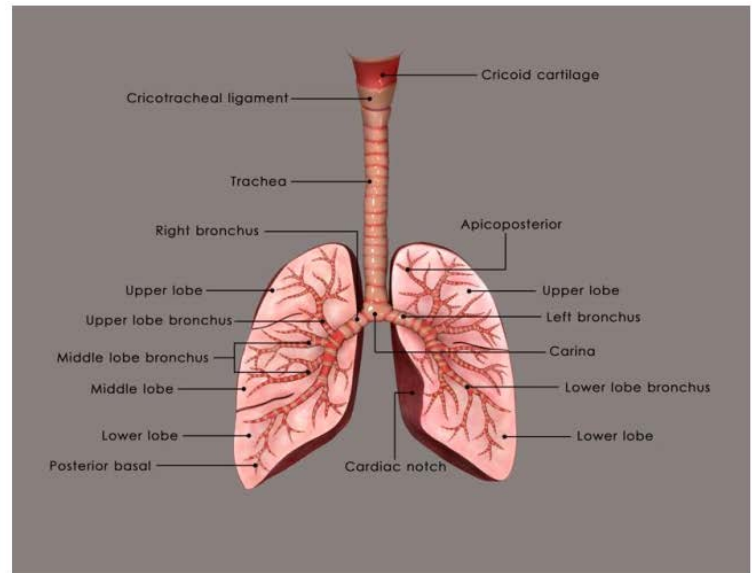
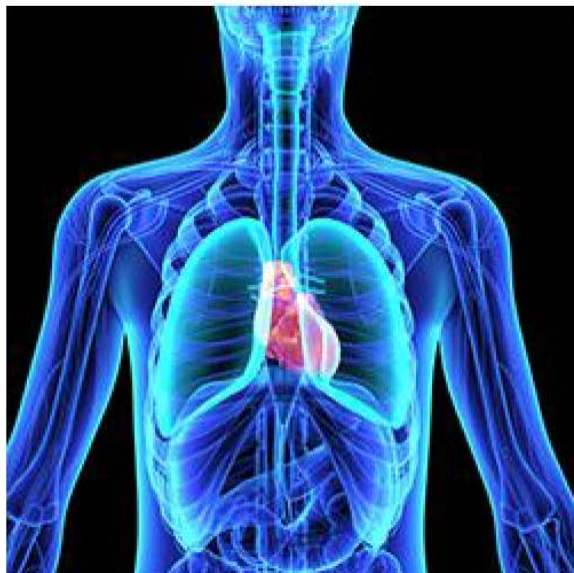


Radiation Treatment Information for Patients with Lung Cancer

This information will help prepare you and your caregiver for your treatment.

What to Expect

You will receive external beam radiation therapy, a noninvasive treatment.



Side Effects

Some people will develop side effects that usually occur within 2-4 weeks following the start of radiation therapy. You may experience some or all of the symptoms below, but they are usually temporary and will subside a few weeks after treatment is complete.

- Fatigue is very common during treatment.
- Shortness of breath or a cough may be temporary or permanent depending on your cancer and treatment.
- Difficulty or pain when swallowing may develop, but should get better a few weeks after treatment is finished.

- Heartburn
- Nausea and vomiting are uncommon with radiation alone, but may be present if chemotherapy is given with radiation.
- The skin on your chest and/or the area of treatment may become red, dry, itchy, or peel during treatment and up to 1 month after your treatment is complete.

Please discuss problems or concerns about side effects or any part of your treatment with your doctor, nurse, or therapist.

Care

Bathe and shower daily using warm water and a mild unscented soap such as Dove or Purpose.

- **Do not** use a washcloth, scrubbing cloth, or brush when bathing.
- Pat skin dry with a soft towel or allow to air dry.
- Apply unscented moisturizers, such as Aquaphor or Aloe vera (90 to 100 percent Aloe vera), to the treated area 2-3 times a day. **Do not** use moisturizers within 4 hours before your radiation treatment.

Because the area being treated has the potential to be more sensitive than the rest of your skin, the following are suggested during treatment:

- Protect your skin from sun exposure and use SPF 30 or more year-round. Avoid tanning or burning your skin during and after treatment.
- Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothing for the treatment

If you have shortness of breath the following might help:

- Use one or two pillows to elevate your upper body while you sleep.
- Use a cold-mist humidifier while you sleep (follow manufacture guidelines).
- Use cough medication as directed.

You can take a multivitamin if you wish, but **do not** take any other vitamins or supplements without discussing with your doctor.

If you have difficulty swallowing pills, ask your doctor about liquid-form medication. Pills can also be crushed and taken with applesauce.

Pain or difficulty swallowing and heartburn are often relieved by **avoiding** the following:

- Very hot foods and liquids
- Hard, dry, and coarse foods
- Spices (e.g., pepper, chili, and curry)
- Acidic or citrus-type foods and juices
- Eating at bedtime
- Take small, moist bites of food

Swimming is permitted **only if**:

- You **do not** have any skin reactions during your treatment
- Pool is chlorinated

Rinse off chlorine right after getting out of pool.

Caution

Contact your radiation oncologist if you have any questions or experience any of the following problems, which can occur weeks or months after treatment.

- Cough, chest pains, shortness of breath, or fever (these are symptoms of radiation pneumonitis, which is treated differently than pneumonia)

Call immediately if you have any of the following symptoms

- Changes in the color of your mucus when coughing
- Temperature of 100.5°F or higher
- Shaking chills
- Flu-like symptoms
- Bleeding

Call 911 for:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath with difficulty breathing

Contact Us

During office hours, call your radiation oncologist. After-hours, call 214-645-8525.