



Risk for Pulmonary (Lung) Problems Related to Cancer Therapy

What is the risk?

Some [chemotherapies](#), [radiation treatments](#), and [surgeries](#) can cause long-term lung issues or problems. Some of these issues (like [graft versus host disease](#) after [bone marrow transplant](#)) may involve the lungs. Some symptoms start shortly after therapy, while others may happen months to years later. Lung problems may include obstructive or restrictive lung diseases (a change in the function of the lungs) or [lung fibrosis](#) (change in the tissue of the lungs). The risk of developing one of these problems is related to the total dose of medication a person has received, which treatments or combination of treatments received, and any lung issues you already have.

Symptoms/When to Call

Pulmonary toxicities can cause symptoms such as shortness of breath or chronic cough. Each year, you should have a physical done by a healthcare provider. This should include a pulmonary exam and review of possible symptoms. If you are having new symptoms of pulmonary issues, you should contact your care provider.

Prevention and Treatment

Survivors should know their baseline exercise status and let their care team know about any changes. Survivors should also avoid smoking and have a lung exam each year. Based on the exact treatments received, some survivors should have pulmonary function testing (PFTs) after they finish treatment, in follow-up, or if they have a change of symptoms. You may have more tests done if needed and based on your symptoms, so it's important to let your providers know about new symptoms and about your cancer treatment.

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