

# Lung Cancer

**Today 1 in 3 cancer deaths among Alaska Natives are from lung cancer.**

Ninety percent of all lung cancers among Alaska Natives are caused by smoking.

The longer a person smokes, the higher the risk for lung cancer.

Stopping smoking at any age lowers the risk of lung cancer. If a person stops smoking before lung cancer develops, the lung tissue can slowly heal.

Quitting smoking greatly reduces the risk of developing other smoking-related diseases, such as:

- *Heart disease*
- *Stroke*
- *Emphysema*
- *Chronic bronchitis*

***There are two major types of lung cancer:***

- **Non-small cell lung cancer** — Most common — grows and spreads more slowly.
- **Small cell lung cancer** — 20 percent of all lung cancers. Also called oat cell cancer, grows more quickly and is likely to spread to other body parts.



ALASKA NATIVE  
MEDICAL CENTER



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## Smoking

- **The No. 1 cause of lung cancer.**
- Smoke contains more than 4,000 different chemicals, including cancer-causing substances (carcinogens). Carcinogens damage lung cells which, over time, may become cancerous.

## Secondhand Smoke

- **Inhaling someone else's smoke is almost as dangerous as smoking yourself.**
- Non-smokers can develop lung cancer by breathing in secondhand smoke — the smoke in the air from someone else's cigarette.



*Healthy lung*



*Non-small cell cancerous lung*

Sources: Lanier, Ersham, Sandidge 2002 • CDC 1998  
[www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org) • [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)  
<http://smokinglungs.com>

Patient Education • Cont/Prep • HEC approval 1/04