



2020 National Lung Health Barometer Media Summary

**Lung Cancer is the
#1 Cancer Killer**



Although there has been a dramatic 28% improvement in the lung cancer survival rate over the past decade,* **more work needs to be done.**

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in the U.S., and despite its undeniable impact on our nation, the disease often remains in the shadows. It is estimated that this year alone, over 228,000 Americans will be diagnosed with lung cancer and 4 in 5 will ultimately die from the disease. While there are many misconceptions about this disease, the fact is that anyone can get lung cancer, and no one deserves it. Every day, lung cancer takes the lives of over 420 of our friends, neighbors and loved ones.

But there's hope. More people are surviving lung cancer than ever before. Despite this progress, a new national survey indicates there's more work to be done in raising awareness and understanding of lung cancer among women.

The **2020 National Lung Health Barometer**- a new, nationally representative survey conducted by the American Lung Association and Cancer Treatment Centers of America®, examined the awareness, attitudes and beliefs of 4,000 Americans about lung health and lung cancer.

The American Lung Association's LUNG FORCE unites our nation to stand together for lung health and against lung cancer. We remain steadfast in our mission of saving lives by improving lung health through education, advocacy, and research, and our efforts are paying off: **more people are surviving lung cancer than ever before.**

- Although lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer deaths among Americans, there has been a dramatic 28 percent improvement in the five-year survival rate over the past 10 years.
- This is due to both the lifesaving potential of lung cancer screening and support of advancements in research, which hold the promise for better treatment options.

Yet, Awareness Remains Low

Awareness of the fact that lung cancer is the leading cancer killer in the U.S. is low, and unfortunately the disease often lacks the resources, support and public empathy committed to conquer other diseases. This gap is likely attributable to the strong, pervasive stigma associated with lung cancer – a stigma that is harmful to the health and lives of patients who are already facing a tough diagnosis.

The survey findings revealed that **only 8% of adults know lung cancer is the #1 cancer killer of women in the U.S.**, compared to 21% of adults who know the disease is the leading cancer killer of men.

**Awareness
Remains Low**



Barometer findings reveal that only **8% of adults** know that lung cancer is the #1 cancer killer of women.



73% of adults have not spoken with their doctor about their risk for lung cancer.

Furthermore, the survey revealed that **73% of adults have not spoken with their doctor** about their risk for lung cancer and **only 38% are concerned** they might get the disease.

Too few adults understand that lung cancer is among the cancers most likely to affect women (20%) and men (34%).

A strategic imperative of the American Lung Association is to defeat lung cancer, and to do so, we need an approach that engages a variety of tactics and stakeholders to address the disease, its risk factors, public policy efforts and public health protections, awareness of lung cancer screening and more.

Screening Offers Potential to Save Lives

Early detection and treatment of lung cancer translate to higher survival rates. However, only 17% of lung cancer cases are diagnosed early, when the disease is most treatable. Early detection, by low-dose CT screening, can decrease lung cancer mortality by up to 20% among the high-risk population.

Approximately 8 million Americans qualify as high risk for lung cancer and are recommended to be screened. If everyone at high-risk were screened, close to 48,000 lives would be saved. Despite this tremendous potential to save lives, less than 5 percent of those eligible have been screened. Raising awareness about this relatively new cancer screening technique is critical to saving lives.



Should you be screened for lung cancer?

- Between 55 and 80 years old
- Smoked a pack-a-day for 30 years or equivalent
- Current smoker or quit within the last 15 years

The Lung Association's "Saved By The Scan" campaign, in partnership with the Ad Council, has helped over 450,000 Americans learn if they are at high risk for lung cancer through a simple eligibility quiz. 31% of quiz respondents were deemed to be eligible for lung cancer screening.

Increased Research Funding Fuels New Breakthroughs

Research provides hope and saves lives. This is especially true when it comes to lung cancer research. Lung cancer research can help develop better treatments, increasing the survival and quality of life for patients. Research can provide a better and longer future for those diagnosed with lung cancer and can also ultimately increase the number of survivors.

Since 2016, 34 new therapies were approved by the FDA to treat lung cancer – giving life and hope to those with lung cancer.

Through **LUNG FORCE**, the American Lung Association has **funded over \$16M in lung cancer research** and helped increase the National Institutes of Health (NIH) lung cancer research funding by over 100% through our advocacy efforts.

LUNG FORCE remains steadfast in its fight against lung cancer and will continue to raise the awareness and critical funding needed to defeat this deadly disease. You can join us by donating to support lifesaving research.

**U.S. National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute: SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2017*