

Your EGFR-positive lung cancer journey



Published November 2021



Use this handout to learn what to expect on the lung cancer journey. You may go through the steps more than once.

Your health care team may include:

- **Oncologist** - cancer doctor
- **Thoracic oncologist** – cancer doctor who specializes in lung cancer
- **Nurses**
- **Pathologist** who reads biopsies
- **Pulmonologist** – lung doctor
- **Radiation oncologist** – doctor who treats cancer with radiation
- **Thoracic surgeon** – doctor who operates on the heart, lungs, and chest
- **Supportive and palliative care doctors** - help manage symptoms and side effects

1 You may have symptoms

You may go to your doctor or an Emergency Department for symptoms, such as a cough, pain, or trouble breathing

2 Testing to find lung cancer

This may include:

- **Lab tests**, such as blood tests
- **Imaging tests**, such as computed tomography (CT), X-rays, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), or positron emission tomography (PET)

3 Diagnosing lung cancer based on test results

Your doctor will do a biopsy (take a sample of blood or tumor tissue to check for cancer and biomarkers). Then, they will diagnose the cancer:

- **Type** – small cell (SCLC) or non-small cell (NSCLC) **and subtype**, such as adenocarcinoma, squamous, or large cell
- **Stage** – the lower the stage, the less advanced the cancer is
- **Biomarkers** – changes in a cancer cell that cause cancer to grow, such as EGFR. They guide treatment decisions.

4 Deciding on treatment

You and your doctor will decide which treatment is right for your EGFR-positive lung cancer. There are different types of treatments. Your treatment plan may include one or more of these in an order that is right for you:

- **Surgery** – removes the tumor
- **Targeted therapy** – medicines that attack cancer cells that have the EGFR biomarker and do less harm to normal cells. They are also called EGFR inhibitors and tyrosine kinase inhibitors (TKIs).
- **Chemotherapy** – medicine to destroy cancer cells
- **Radiation therapy** – beams of high-energy to kill cancer cells
- **Clinical trials** – research studies

5 Ongoing care and checkups

This may include:

- **Care to lessen symptoms** or treatment side effects
- **More imaging tests, lab work, or repeat biopsies** to check for biomarkers and see how well the treatment is working
- **Follow-up visits**
- **Other support**, such as help with financial needs, insurance, and nutrition

Find a list of questions to ask on your journey and learn more at egfrcancer.org

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