



Scientists Seeking to Understand Why Lung Cancers are Now Found in Nonsmokers

There is a strange reality being observed by some doctors, which is that some lung cancers are now appearing in people who have never smoked. This challenges the long-held theory that smoking is almost always the cause of lung cancer.

Lung cancer is the deadliest cancer in the United States, but while overall incidence and deaths have dropped largely thanks to less cigarette use, lung cancers not linked to cigarette use have persisted.

Globally, 10–25% of lung cancers occur in nonsmokers. In Asian and Asian American women, that share is estimated at 50% or more. With cigarette use dropping, researchers are investigating why and are looking into environmental exposures, genetic predispositions, and other risk factors. Their work has already identified potential links between air pollution and DNA mutations associated with lung cancer. One extensive study of 871 nonsmokers with lung cancer worldwide found that certain mutations or changes to DNA were more common in people living near areas with higher levels of air pollution, such as places like Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Uzbekistan. It was found that more pollution was linked to more mutations. Pollution may not only damage DNA but also may cause cells to divide more rapidly, further increasing the likelihood of cancer.

Researchers also found that people who don't smoke but who do have a family history of lung cancer are also at an increased risk. This could be due to shared genetics, a common environment, or both. There are also likely other factors, such as exposure to radon, asbestos, and possibly aristolochic acid, which is a compound once common in

traditional Chinese medicine. This compound was linked to lung cancer mutations among Taiwanese patients.

Additionally, studies from Asia suggest that secondhand smoke, fumes from cooking oils, and a history of tuberculosis or other lung disease could be increasing lung cancer risk. However, these risk factors are less common in the United States, where non-smoking Asian American women are still nearly twice as likely as other women to get lung cancer. To better understand this disparity, researchers are studying relationships among genes, environmental contaminants, and lung cancer in Asian American nonsmoking women.

Many lung cancers in nonsmokers have no known cause and are discovered only by chance. In the United States, routine screening is recommended only for people ages 50 to 80 who smoked at least the equivalent of one cigarette pack per day for 20 years. Thankfully, survival with advanced cancers has improved with new therapies that keep the disease at bay for years in many patients.

Advocacy groups like the Young Lung Cancer Initiative are working to raise awareness and change the thinking around lung cancer, which appears to not just be limited to people who smoke.

Original Source:

Agrawal, N., & Jiang, A. (2025, July 22). Many lung cancers are now in nonsmokers. Scientists want to know why. *The New York Times*. ●

Beat the Flu this Season

It's almost officially fall, which means the season is here and will be ramping up quickly. While your favorite team might be getting in mid-season stride, something else is reaching its peak at the same time – flu season. Although detected year-round, most flu viruses are spread in the fall and winter. Usually, flu activity begins increasing in October, so ideally, everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine by the end of October.

The CDC recommends an annual flu vaccine as the most important step to reduce your risk of flu and potentially serious flu outcomes. Furthermore, vaccination of people at higher risk is especially important to help reduce their risk of severe flu illness. Higher risk people include young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions, and people 65 years of age and older.

The Flu Gameplan

To beat the flu this season, remember **the first and most important step is getting a flu vaccine**. Additionally, the following good health habits can

help beat the flu:

- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick, avoid contact with others as much as possible. If you get the flu, stay home for at least 24 hours until both are true: improved symptoms and no fever.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands often.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.¹

Even the best strategies don't always go according to plan, so if you do end up getting the flu, know that most people with the flu have mild symptoms and do not need medical care or antiviral drugs. If you do get sick, please stay home to avoid spreading the flu to others. If you are very sick or worried about your illness, contact your healthcare provider to see if you need antivirals or other treatment options.²

Your PEEHIP benefits allow you to receive your flu vaccine via a variety of different options:

- Your doctor's office
- Your local pharmacy
- The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). To see a listing of available and upcoming flu shot clinics, please visit <https://dph1.adph.state.al.us/PublicCal2/>.

There is no additional cost or copay for any of the flu shot options. Please remember to bring your PEEHIP ID card to whichever location you choose for your vaccine.

Members covered under the PEEHIP UnitedHealthcare® Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) Plan: Be sure to show your UnitedHealthcare® ID card when getting a flu shot from your doctor, your pharmacy, or the ADPH.

Contact your network pharmacy in advance to inquire about flu vaccine availability, age restrictions, and current vaccination schedules. Also, don't forget to present your member ID card to the pharmacist. ●

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevention/index.html>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/takingcare/index.html>

Wellness Screening Deadline

The August 31 deadline to get a wellness screening and earn a waiver of the \$50 monthly wellness premium has passed. If you did not get your screening, you are not locked into incurring the wellness premium all plan year. Make plans to get a wellness screening at your first opportunity, and you will earn the waiver prospectively for the remainder of the plan year.

Available options to get your screening:

- The ADPH offers free screenings at PEEHIP worksite locations and county health departments. To view the availability schedule, visit <https://dph1.adph.state.al.us/PublicCal2/>.
- Screenings are available from your primary healthcare provider. Bring a PEEHIP Healthcare Provider Screening Form for your provider to complete and submit by mail or fax to the ADPH. The form can be found

at rsa-al.gov/peehip/wellness/.

- Screenings are available at participating pharmacies all over the state. To see a list of participating pharmacies, visit rsa-al.gov/peehip/wellness/ or call Blue Cross and Blue Shield at 800.327.3994. If you choose to get your screening at a pharmacy, an appointment may be required. ●

Medicare-Eligible PEEHIP Members

The information below pertains to Medicare-eligible PEEHIP retirees or Medicare-eligible dependents of PEEHIP retirees. For more information, visit rsa-al.gov/peehip/retirees/.

You're invited

Join us for an informational meeting

Humana will be hosting a series of informational meetings for PEEHIP retirees to learn more about the PEEHIP Humana Group Medicare Advantage PPO Plan. To make the most of your benefits, please join us at any of the informational meetings included in this invitation.

During the meetings, Humana representatives will share a short presentation followed by a question and answer session. Additionally, representatives from PEEHIP and Humana will be available after each informational meeting to answer any questions on a one-on-one basis.

If you plan to attend one of the meetings listed within this invitation, please call Humana's Group Medicare

Customer Care team at 800.733.3015 (TTY: 711), Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. CT, to reserve your spot. While you are not required to RSVP, we highly encourage you to do so.

For questions about the events or for special needs accommodations, please call 800.747.0008 (TTY: 711), Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. CT. Additional information can be found at your.humana.com/peehip.

For your convenience

If you are unable to attend an in-person meeting, you have the option to attend a webinar. Two webinars will be available that will allow you to hear and view the presentation online. The dates and times for these webinars are included below.

Join us in-person

For your convenience, we have multiple dates available throughout the state of Alabama. Please choose a meeting from the list on this page. All meeting times are CT. We look forward to seeing you in one of the informational meetings.

Monday, Sept. 8, 2025 | 9 a.m.

Sweetwater Depot
502 S Royal Ave, Florence, AL 35630

Monday, Sept. 8, 2025 | 2:30 p.m.

Jackson Center, Discovery Hall A
6001 Moquin Dr NW, Huntsville, AL 35806

Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025 | 9 a.m.

The Venue at Coosa Landing, South Hall
201 George Wallace Dr, Gadsden, AL 35903

Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025 | 2:30 p.m.

Venue 31 Event Center
3150 Lee St, Pelham, AL 35124

Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2025 | 9 a.m.

Hotel Capstone, Ballroom A-D
320 Paul W Bryant Dr, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Please utilize the designated hotel parking.

Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2025 | 2 p.m.

Dempolis Civic Center
501 N Commissioners Ave, Demopolis, AL 36732

Thursday, Sept. 11, 2025 | 10 a.m. & 2 p.m.

Soiree Event Gallery, Grand Ballroom
2132 Lornaridge Lane, Birmingham, AL 35216

Monday, Sept. 15, 2025 | 9 a.m.

The Hotel at Auburn University, Auditorium
241 S College St, Auburn, AL 36830
Please park on the 4th and 5th floor of the parking garage. The code for the garage is 1112.

Monday, Sept. 15, 2025 | 2 p.m.

Troy University's Davis Theatre for the Performing Arts
251 Montgomery St, Montgomery, AL 36104
Parking is available in the lot adjacent to the theatre.

Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025 | 9 a.m.

The Forum, Excelsior Room
231 W Main St, Dothan, AL 36310

Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025 | 2:30 p.m.

Andalusia High School Auditorium
701 3rd St, Andalusia, AL 36420

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025 | 9 a.m.

Belforest Pointe
26503 AL-181, Daphne, AL 36526

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025 | 2 p.m.

Spring Hill College, Byrne Memorial Hall
4000 Dauphin St, Mobile, AL 36608
Byrne Memorial Hall is located off the Old Shell Road entrance of the college. Once on campus, follow the signs to Byrne Memorial Hall.

Join us virtually

To attend a webinar, dial into the meeting by using the phone number provided. In order to both hear and view the presentation during the webinar, please dial in and then enter the designated web address into your internet browser that is listed under the date and time you would like to attend. You may also scan the QR Code with your mobile device to join the meeting of your choice. All webinar times are CT.

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android

Friday, Sept. 12, 2025 | 2 p.m.

Webinar link: <https://humana/PEEHIPwebinar1>

Dial-in: 312.626.6799

Dial-in toll-free: 888.788.0099

Webinar ID: 918 2875 7983

Passcode, if prompted: 112233



Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2025 | 9 a.m.

Webinar link: <https://humana/PEEHIPwebinar2>

Dial-in: 312.626.6799

Dial-in toll-free: 888.788.0099

Webinar ID: 999 4189 4505

Passcode, if prompted:

112233 ●



Chronic Pain

Managing chronic pain every day can be challenging. When you hurt all the time, it's easy to feel isolated. You may think that other people don't understand what you're going through. But in fact, about 50 million adults in the U.S. have chronic pain. It's one of the most common reasons adults seek medical care, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

What is chronic pain?

Chronic pain can happen because of medical conditions or a past injury. It's defined as persistent pain lasting longer than 3 months. It can persist for years, even after you've recovered. In some cases, pain can be fueled by ongoing medical conditions like cancer. In others, it can occur without past injury or illness.

Chronic pain can affect you emotionally as well as physically. It can get in the way of daily routines and can even lead to depression and anxiety.¹ The American Chronic Pain Association (ACPA) and the Stanford University Division of Pain Medicine recommends the biopsychosocial approach to treatment. That means it addresses the emotional, mental, and social aspects of pain along with the physical.²

Chronic pain treatment options

"Chronic pain is a problem that affects the mind, the body, and social functioning," says Efrat Hedges Eichenbaum, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist based in Phoenix. "To get the most out of your treatment, I urge both providers and patients to seek an integrated approach."

Holistic medicine treats the whole person. It includes medical and mental health remedies as well as non-drug therapies. Let's look at how some of these strategies may help with chronic pain.

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: CBT helps form more helpful thought patterns and behaviors that can reduce stress and tension.



- Mental Health Support³
- The Relaxation Response: This includes meditation, mindfulness, biofeedback, box breathing, and progressive muscle relaxation.
- Physical Activity: Moving more can make it much easier to go about your day in a way that's not so painful. Exercising regularly can also have a major positive effect on mood.⁴
- Medications

Talk to your doctor about managing your chronic pain. To learn more about your UnitedHealthcare® Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) Plan, visit retiree.uhc.com/peehip or call 877.298.2341, TTY 711, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. CT, Monday – Friday. ●

¹ Chronic pain among adults - United States, 2019-2021

² American Chronic Pain Association and Stanford University Division of Pain Medicine. 2021

³ If you or someone you know is in crisis— seek safety and get help right away. If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 911 or go to the closest emergency room. To reach a trained crisis counselor, call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (previously known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) at 988 or 800.273.TALK (800.273.8255). You may also text 988 or chat at 988.lifeline.org. The lifeline provides 24/7 free and confidential support.

⁴ Talk with your doctor before significantly increasing your activity level. Ask about the amounts and types of activities that may be best for you. Remember, moderation is best when starting an exercise regimen. Start slowly and gradually increase how often, how vigorous, and how long you exercise. Moving even a little improves your health.

Content is for general informational purposes only and not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for professional health care. See your physician for medical advice personalized to your situation. Consult your doctor prior to beginning an exercise program or making changes to your lifestyle or health care routine.