

## What is Lung Cancer?

2026

Lung cancer is not a single disease; rather it is a group of cancers that originate in the lung and associated tissues. Lung cancers are divided into three major types: small cell lung cancer (SCLC), non-small lung cancer (NSCLC) and lung carcinoid tumors. Lung cancer accounts for more deaths than any other cancer in men and women. While smoking is the number one cause of lung cancer, exposure to radon gas is estimated to be the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

In Indiana, during 2018-2022, 28,786 individuals were diagnosed with invasive lung cancer and 17,700 died as a result of this disease.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 1: Lung Cancer Incidence and Mortality (Death) Rates by Sex and Race—Indiana, 2018-2022\***

	Incidence Rate	Mortality Rate
<b>All Sexes/Races</b>	66.8	41.4
<b>White NH</b>	69.1*	43.5 *
<b>Black NH</b>	65.3	37.7*
<b>Hispanic</b>	23.7*	11.1*
<b>All Males</b>	76.3*	47.7*
<b>White NH Male</b>	78.3*	49.8*
<b>Black NH Male</b>	82.7	47.1
<b>Hispanic Male</b>	25.5*	11.2*
<b>All Females</b>	59.9*	36.4*
<b>White NH Female</b>	62.4*	38.6*
<b>Black NH Female</b>	53.9	30.8
<b>Hispanic Female</b>	22.2*	10.9*

Source: Indiana State Cancer Registry

Note: Excludes *in situ*

Age-adjusted to the US 2000 Standard Population

\*Rate is statistically significantly higher or lower than the overall state

## Prevention

- Be smoke-free—Visit [QuitNowIndiana.com](https://www.quitnowindiana.com) or call 1-800-Quit-Now for free tobacco dependence treatment resources.
- The lungs can gradually repair themselves if an individual stops smoking before cancer develops. Regardless of how long a person has smoked, ending dependence on tobacco can help lower the risk for cancer and a multitude of other diseases.
- Eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Have your home tested and treated for radon.
- Avoid exposure to cancer-causing chemicals.
- Eat a healthy diet, including fresh fruits and vegetables<sup>1</sup>

## Screening

The United States Preventive Services Task Force recommends annual screening for lung cancer with low dose computed tomography in adults aged 50 to 80 years who have a 20-pack-per-year smoking history and currently smoke, or who have quit within the past 15 years. Screening can be discontinued once a person has not smoked for 15 years, or develops a health problem that substantially limits life expectancy or the ability or willingness to have curative lung surgery.<sup>5</sup>

## Differences in Health Outcomes

In Indiana, during 2018-2022, males had higher incidence and mortality rates when compared to females. In addition, Black males had higher mortality rates than white males [Table 1]. In comparison, from 2018– 2022 white males had a higher mortality rate of 49.8 versus Black males at 47.1<sup>2</sup>

## References

1. American Cancer Society. *Facts & Figures 2026*. American Cancer Society. Atlanta, Ga. 2026. <https://www.cancer.org/research/cancer-facts-statistics/all-cancer-facts-figures/2024-cancer-facts-figures.html>
2. Indiana State Cancer Registry
3. American Cancer Society. ACS Report: Cancer Prevention & Early Detection Facts & Figures, 2023-2024. <https://www.cancer.org/research/cancer-facts-statistics/cancer-prevention-early-detection.html>
4. Indiana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2026
5. USPTFS. <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/lung-cancer-screening>