

Your EGFR-positive lung cancer journey



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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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