



International Respiratory experts Use World Lung Cancer Day to Stress the Importance of Lung Cancer Screening and Risk Factor Awareness

GLENVIEW, Ill. - Globally, lung cancer is the [leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide](#) for both men and women. In 2020, there were 2.5 million new lung cancer cases globally and 1.80 million deaths.

In support of World Lung Cancer Day on August 1, the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS), of which Pan African Thoracic Society is a founding member, stresses the importance of awareness and understanding of lung cancer risk factors, as well as the importance of early detection through lung cancer screening.

While smoking is the single greatest risk factor for lung cancer, accounting for [85% of all cases](#), other lesser-known risk factors include the environmental exposures—including air pollution—and genetics. Environmental exposure to radon, asbestos, arsenic, beryllium and uranium has been linked to lung cancer. The risk of lung cancer also increases with a history of cancer in another part of the body, age, family history, radiation to the chest area and lung diseases like COPD.

“By coming together as a community of respiratory experts, we can impact the future of lung cancer care,” said Guy Marks, President of FIRS. “Through global collaboration, we have the power to raise awareness of lung cancer risk factors and to encourage early lung cancer screenings. The earlier lung cancer is detected, the sooner a patient can begin treatment. Lives can be saved through earlier detection and, together, we can positively impact the outcome of a lung cancer diagnosis.”

In the United States of America, the [2021 guideline for lung cancer screening](#) from the American College of Chest Physicians, recommend that anyone who is a current tobacco user or has a history of smoking and are 50 years or older, may be a candidate for a screening low-dose CT scan. This is a step that can potentially detect lung cancer in its earliest stages.

Lung cancer symptoms can include a cough that does not go away, chest pain, shortness of breath, coughing up blood, unexplained weight loss, and lung infections that keep coming back. Tests that may be used to diagnose lung cancer include physical examination, imaging (chest x-rays, CT scans, and MRI), bronchoscopy, or biopsy.

Resources:

- A guideline with systematic evaluation of criteria for lung cancer screening, “[Screening for Lung Cancer: CHEST Guideline and Expert Panel Report](#),” can be accessed through the journal *CHEST*®.
- To learn more about lung cancer screening, visit <https://www.iarc.who.int/infographics/benefits-and-harms-of-lung-cancer-screening/>.
- For tobacco cessation resources, visit <https://www.who.int/teams/health-promotion/tobacco-control>.

About the Forum of International Respiratory Societies

The Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) is an organisation comprised of the world's leading international respiratory societies working together to improve lung health globally. The goal of FIRS is to unify and enhance efforts to improve lung health through the combined work of its more than 100,000 members globally.

FIRS comprises the American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST), American Thoracic Society (ATS), the Asian Pacific Society of Respiriology (APSR), Asociación Latinoamericana de Tórax (ALAT), European Respiratory Society (ERS), International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), Pan African Thoracic Society (PATS), the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) and the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD).

[Pan African Thoracic Society](#) (PATS) is a society comprising healthcare professionals from across the continent and beyond. Since its establishment in 2003, we have grown to include over 1,000 members from 65 countries. Our primary mission is to promote lung health in Africa, a continent deeply affected by respiratory diseases. Through education, research, advocacy, optimal care, and capacity development, we strive to effectively address respiratory challenges in Africa. We actively collaborate with regional and international respiratory organizations to improve lung health globally. Guided by FIRS and an influential Executive Committee we are committed to reducing morbidity and mortality associated with respiratory diseases in Africa

