

Innovations In Medicine

Video-Assisted Surgery Helps Lung Cancer Patients

(NAPSA)—Lung cancer is the second-most commonly diagnosed cancer in both men and women, and the leading cause of cancer death. Many of the estimated 180,000 Americans who will be diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer—the most common form of lung cancer—this year may be able to breathe easier thanks to innovative treatments that make the disease a little easier to deal with.

The sooner cancer is treated, the better the outcome is likely to be. Below are some of the top causes of and risks for lung cancer. If any of the following applies to you or someone you know, you may want to speak with your physician about your risks and options:

1) Smoking. Smoking and secondhand smoke are responsible for 87 percent of lung cancer cases.

2) Radon exposure. Radon is an inert gas that can be present in soil and water and seep into any dwelling.

3) On-the-job exposure to carcinogens such as asbestos, uranium and arsenic.

4) Pollution.

5) Family history of lung cancer.

Often, when lung cancer is detected, surgically removing the cancerous portion of the lung can increase survival rates. For more than a decade, doctors have been able to perform a kind of lung cancer surgery that gets patients with clinical stage one, non-small cell lung cancer feeling better faster, may improve the time to full activity, and make delivery of



Video-assisted surgery is tough on cancer but easier on patients than traditional surgery.

planned chemotherapy more feasible. It's called VATS, for video-assisted thoracic surgery. Unlike open surgery, which requires a large incision in the chest, VATS uses three or four small incisions, and the surgeon performs the procedure using a video camera and endoscope.

Clinical evidence supports several advantages over open surgery, said Scott J. Swanson, M.D., director, minimally invasive thoracic surgery at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Massachusetts.

"Compared with open surgery, VATS results in far less trauma and patients may return to work and daily activities as soon as a week after surgery. Ordinary surgery may require four to six weeks of recovery time. The procedure can also be used to take tissue samples to determine the presence of disease," said Dr. Swanson.

Doctors, lung cancer patients and people who care about them can learn more at www.mipinfo.com.

Note To Editor—included with this release is a list of references:

i American Lung Association: Lung Cancer. Retrieved 11/10/09 from <http://www.lungusa.org/lung-disease/lung-cancer/>

ii American Cancer Society, "What Are the Key Statistics About Lung Cancer?," Retrieved 11/10/09 from http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/content/CRI_2_4_1x_What_Are_the_Key_Statistics_About_Lung_Cancer_15.asp?sitearea

iii American Lung Association: Understanding Lung Cancer. Retrieved 11/10/09 from <http://www.lungusa.org/lung-disease/lung-cancer/about-lung-cancer/understanding-lung-cancer.html>

iv Mayo Clinic: Lung Cancer Risk Factors. Retrieved 11/10/09 from <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/lung-cancer/DS00038/DSECTION=risk-factors>

v National Cancer Institute. Stage I Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer. Retrieved 12/12/08 from <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/pdq/treatment/non-small-cell-lung/HealthProfessional/page8>