



# Plain Language Summary

## Palliative Care Recommendations for people with Lung Cancer



Palliative care focuses on improving comfort and quality of life by relieving symptoms such as pain, breathlessness, cough, and fatigue. It can be given at any stage of lung cancer, along with treatments like chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or other medicines

### Who is this summary for?

This summary is intended for adults with lung cancer at any stage who may need palliative care to manage symptoms and improve comfort and quality of life, as well as for their families, caregivers, patient advocates, and healthcare professionals.

## What Does the guideline recommend?

For people with lung cancer, does starting palliative care early, along with regular cancer treatment, lead to better outcomes than cancer treatment alone?

01

**Starting palliative (supportive) care early, together with standard cancer treatment, is recommended for patients with lung cancer.**

### Why is it recommended?

Improved quality of life with early palliative care: Studies suggest that introducing palliative care early helps patients manage symptoms better, improves emotional well-being, and improves overall quality of life.

For people with advanced lung cancer who have difficulty in breathing, does using a combination of treatments work better than medicines alone in relieving breathlessness?

02

**Multimodal treatment (such as breathing exercises, physiotherapy or gentle exercise, using a hand-held fan, emotional support, and medicines) is recommended instead of medicines alone to help manage breathlessness in people with advanced lung cancer.**

### Why is it recommended?

Better control of breathlessness with combined approaches: Studies show that using a combination of treatments such as breathing techniques, physiotherapy, psychosocial support, and medications provides better relief from breathlessness than medicines alone.

For people newly diagnosed with lung cancer, does using a combination of treatments help manage problems like poor sleep, tiredness, and low mood better than counselling or psychological support alone?

Using a combination of treatments to manage sleep problems, tiredness, and low mood is recommended for people newly diagnosed with lung cancer, instead of counselling alone.

#### Why is it recommended?

Better symptom control with multimodal approach: A combination treatment that addresses sleep, energy and mood together shows moderate benefits for these symptoms compared with psychotherapy alone.

## Different Stages of Lung Cancer

### STAGE 01

The cancer is small and limited to the lung. It has not spread to lymph nodes or other parts of the body.

### STAGE 02

The cancer is larger than 5 cm and may have spread to nearby areas, such as lymph nodes close to the lung.

### STAGE 03

The cancer has spread further to surrounding areas, especially lymph nodes in the centre of the chest. This is called regional spread.

### STAGE 04

The cancer has spread to distant parts of the body, such as the other lung, brain, bones, or liver.

## Key Medical Terms: Made Simple

### Palliative care

Care that focuses on improving comfort and quality of life for people with serious illnesses such as cancer

### Multimodal Treatment

Using a combination of treatments (for example, medicines + exercise + breathing training + counselling).

### Dyspnoea/breathlessness

Shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing.

### Psychological care

Support for emotional and mental well-being. It can include counselling or talking with a trained professional to help people cope with stress, anxiety, low mood, fear, or emotional difficulties related to illness and treatment.

## Who developed these guidelines?

These guidelines were released by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. They were developed by Department of Health Research, Directorate General of Health Services & National Health Systems Resource Centre. These recommendations are based on careful review of the best available studies



To read the complete guidelines, scan the QR code