



2024 Lung Health Barometer Media Summary

70% of survey respondents agreed they felt hopeful that the outcomes for those impacted by lung cancer improved over the past 10 years.



Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S., with about 235,000 new cases projected¹ this year alone. Despite misconceptions surrounding the devastating disease, it can affect anyone—regardless of background—having a profound impact that claims nearly 370 lives daily².

Despite recent strides in detecting and treating lung cancer, a new, national survey conducted by the American Lung Association revealed a surprising lack of awareness. The **2024 Lung Health Barometer**, which examined the awareness, attitudes and beliefs of 4,000 Americans about lung cancer, found that only 28% of those surveyed knew lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in this country and 38% were familiar with lifesaving lung cancer screening, which is available for those who are at high risk.

The findings underscore the critical need for initiatives like the American Lung Association’s LUNG FORCE, which unites patients and caregivers nationwide to stand together against lung cancer. Through education, advocacy and research, we remain steadfast in our mission of saving lives and our efforts are paying off: **more people are surviving lung cancer than ever before.**

Key to these gains are advancements in screening technology and research, promising new treatment options and improved outcomes. However, awareness remains a barrier, hindering research funding and widespread adoption of screening.

How Stigma Undermines Patient Wellbeing

A major challenge is the stigma associated with lung cancer, which limits public empathy and resources compared to other diseases. This stigma harms patients and complicates their journey with a disease that demands greater awareness and support.

Alarmingly, the survey revealed that 73% of adults have not discussed their lung cancer risk with a doctor. In addition, only 42% expressed concern about developing lung cancer, reflecting a widespread misunderstanding of its prevalence and impact.

While a strategic imperative of the Lung Association is to defeat lung cancer, we need an approach that engages a variety of tactics and stakeholders to address the disease, its risk factors, public policy efforts and public health protections, awareness of lung cancer screening and more.

Only **15%** of respondents were aware that the lung cancer survival rate increased by over **50%** in the past ten years.





Greater awareness of lung cancer is key to securing research funding, encouraging lung cancer screening and reducing the stigma around this disease.

The Power of Lung Cancer Screening

Detecting and treating lung cancer early significantly increases survival rates. Nationally, only 23% of cases are identified in the early stages, where the five-year survival rate reaches 63%³. Lung cancer screening plays a pivotal role in detecting the disease early.

Approximately 14 million Americans are classified as high-risk for lung cancer and, as such, recommended for screening. In 2021, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force revised the lung cancer screening eligibility guidelines, reducing the age for eligibility to 50 (from 55) and the pack years smoked to 20 (from 30). These new guidelines doubled the number of women and Black Americans who qualify. Despite these strides, only 7.7% of those eligible were screened in 2023^{4,5,6}.

The American Lung Association's "Saved By The Scan" campaign, in collaboration with the Ad Council, has already helped more than 1.3 million individuals discover their eligibility for lung cancer screening through a simple online quiz.

Research Funding Drives New Breakthroughs

Research remains pivotal in the fight against lung cancer with ongoing investments yielding nearly 60 new therapies approved since 2016. Through the LUNG FORCE initiative, the Lung Association has been at the forefront, investing over \$30 million in research efforts that contribute significantly to global scientific advancements.

Moving forward, increased public awareness and support are critical to overcoming the challenges posed by lung cancer. By rallying behind initiatives like LUNG FORCE and advocating for expanded screening and research funding, we can strive toward a future where fewer lives are lost to this devastating disease.



For more information, please visit: Lung.org/barometer

¹ Siegel RL, Miller KD, Waggle NS, Jemal A. *Cancer Statistics, 2024*. CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians, 2024.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. *CDC WONDER On-line Database, compiled from Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2021*.

³ U.S. National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute: *SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2020*.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2022*. Analysis by the American Lung Association Epidemiology and Statistics Unit using SPSS software.

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. *National Health Interview Survey, 2015*. Analysis performed by the American Lung Association Epidemiology and Statistics Unit using SPSS software.

⁶ American College of Radiology. *LCSR State-Level Comparison Reports, 2023*.