A Cancer Center Designated by the National Cancer Institute

Comprehensive Cancer Center

LUNG CANCER
CLINICAL RESEARCH

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ABOUT THE LUNG CANCER CLINICAL RESEARCH TEAM

The University of Arizona Cancer Center’s lung cancer program combines excellent patient care with state-of-the-art research to fight the number one cause of cancer deaths for U.S. men and women.

The lung cancer clinical research team has a multidisciplinary team of pulmonologists, thoracic surgeons, radiation oncologists, medical oncologists, screening specialists, nurse navigators, tobacco cessation specialists, supportive care professionals, and nutrition counselors.

Doctors meet weekly in tumor boards to discuss patient cases, including diagnosis of nodules and individualized treatment plans. Cases are re-reviewed as treatment progresses. Recently, the team has expanded its lung cancer screening program, which helps identify lung cancer earlier when it is more treatable.

CLINICAL RESEARCH FOCUS

The team’s clinical trials portfolio includes industry-sponsored investigational medicines and state-of-the-art cooperative trials from National Cancer Institute’s National Clinical Trials Network (NCTN), with investigator-initiated trials being planned for the future. Additionally, the team works closely with radiation oncology. Current efforts include:

• Trials testing new combinations, such as for recurrent non-small cell lung cancer.
• Collaborative trials combining state-of-the-art radiation with investigational agents, including new immunotherapies and radiation sensitizers that may improve the results of radiation alone.
• Trials of new bronchoscopy technology to improve diagnosis and potential treatment of lung cancer.
• Trials of new biomarkers that aim to improve diagnosis of lung cancer and early detection of relapse.

BASIC AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

Medical oncologists meet regularly with basic scientists through translation science teams to advance new lung discoveries from the lab at the University to cutting-edge clinical trials for lung cancer patients. For example, basic researchers identified a potential biomarker for lung cancer in the pleural fluid of the lung, that clinical investigators will study in a clinical trial.

Additionally, the Cancer Center is a leader in addressing the unique psychosocial factors critical to lung cancer treatment and survivorship. This includes research to understand the factors and the development and testing of interventions. Most recently, this includes an intervention to reduce stigma and improve outcomes, and an NCI grant to understand resilience factors in Hispanic and Latino lung cancer patients.

YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Linda Garland, MD
Medical Oncology
Cancer Prevention and Control Program

“We have a really great clinical trials team that is well versed in radiation, chemotherapy and immunotherapy trials. My goal for our team is to improve on our ability to find lung cancer at its earliest stage, to make lung cancer screening available to all high-risk persons and to bring novel drugs and combinations to our patients to continue improving outcomes for lung cancer at all stages.”

Heidi Hamann, PhD
Cancer Prevention and Control Program

“As more effective treatments have increased lung cancer survivorship, there’s an emerging focus on addressing the patient’s supportive care needs. If you are going through something as stressful as lung cancer, it is critical to have social support and good communication with your medical team. The overall focus of our psychosocial research and supportive care is ‘how do we make the experience of cancer care better for patients?’”

Ricklie Julian, MD
Medical Oncology

“Lung cancer is really the poster child for personalized medicine. The treatment landscape has really transformed in recent years with the advent of immunotherapy. So, our team always looks for the targeted treatment and/or trial that works best for the patient’s cancer and for their individual preferences and philosophy.”

Joann Sweasy, PhD
Director, University of Arizona Cancer Center
Nancy C. and Craig M. Berge Endowed Chair

“Lung cancer is a priority area for the Center. We have a strong emphasis on prevention and a well-known team that has pioneered behavioral interventions such as methods of helping people stop smoking. In the future, we hope to strengthen our portfolio, offering more cutting-edge trials to our patients.”