

About surgery

- Not all people with lung cancer can have it removed by surgery.
- Surgery removes part of or all of the lung.

Lung cancer surgery is an option for some patients depending on:

- What type of lung cancer you have
- Where your lung cancer is
- The stage of your lung cancer
- What other health problems you have.

To try to cure lung cancer with the surgery, a surgeon will remove the tumour and some surrounding lung tissue. Removing the tumour with lung cancer surgery is considered the best option when the cancer is on one area of the lung and it hasn't spread. This often includes early stage non-small cell lung cancers and carcinoid tumours.

Surgery may be the first step in lung cancer treatment or it may follow other treatments.

Surgeons will use the following operations to treat lung cancer:

Wedge resection

A wedge resection is the removal of a small, wedge-shaped part of the lung tissue surrounding the cancerous tumour.

Lobectomy

Lobectomy is the removing (resecting) the lobe (section) of the lung affected by lung cancer. This is the most common lung cancer surgery. A bilobectomy is the removal of two lobes in the same lung. The right lung has three lobes; the left lung has two lobes.

Pneumonectomy

Pneumonectomy is the removal of all the lung affected by cancer. This is usually done if the cancer cannot be fully removed with the lobectomy. A surgeon may also remove a lung if your treatment team believes that cancer may have spread throughout the left or right lung or if the cancer tumour is in the middle area of your lungs.

A lung cancer surgery called a sleeve resection is also sometimes done. A [sleeve resection](#) starts with the removal of lung cancer tumours. These tumours can be in the main airway ([bronchus](#)), part of the pulmonary artery (artery to the lung) or the lobe. The ends of the bronchus are rejoined and any good lobes are rejoined to the bronchus.

Each type of lung cancer treatment option has possible side effects. It is important to know the possible side effects and ways to manage these before beginning lung cancer treatment.

Possible lung cancer surgery side effects

- Pain
- Possible problems after and caused by the lung cancer surgery
- Breathlessness
- [Learn how to cope with side effects.](#)

Talk about what worries you, possible side effects and any effects that you experience with your doctor.