

# Smoking cessation after cancer diagnosis associated with improved survival

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Patients with lung cancer who quit smoking after their diagnosis have a 29 percent improvement in their overall survival compared to patients who continue smoking after diagnosis, according to a study published in the *Journal of Thoracic Oncology*, the official journal of the International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer.

Researchers led by Dr. Saverio Caini from the Institute for Cancer Research, Prevention and Clinical Network in Florence, Italy, summarized the current scientific evidence on whether quitting smoking at or around diagnosis has a beneficial effect on the survival of patients with lung cancer.

Dr. Caini and his team conducted a [meta-analysis](#) of published research on smoking cessation after lung cancer diagnosis and found 21 articles covering more than 10,000 patients, published between before October 2021.

The researchers found that smoking cessation after diagnosis was significantly associated with improved overall survival (SRR 0.71, 95% CI 0.64-0.80), consistently among patients with non-small cell LC (SRR 0.77, 95% CI 0.66-0.90, n studies = 8), small cell LC (SRR 0.75, 95% CI 0.57-0.99, n studies = 4), or lung cancer of both or unspecified histological type (SRR 0.81, 95% CI 0.68-0.96, n studies = 6).

"Our study suggests that treating physicians should educate patients with lung cancer about the benefits of quitting smoking even after diagnosis and provide them with the necessary smoking cessation support," said Dr. Caini.

Smoking cessation may play a positive role in lung cancer survival because [tobacco smoke](#) promotes [tumor growth](#), progression, and dissemination; decreases the efficacy of, and tolerance to, radiation and systemic therapy; and increases the risk of post-operative complications and second primary cancers, according to the study.

"The meta-analysis has implications beyond [clinical practice](#)," Dr. Caini said. "Since heavy smokers would be primarily targeted by [lung cancer](#) screening programs, screening could serve as a teachable moment to help participants quit smoking by integrating a structured cessation program

into the screening activities."

**More information:** Saverio Caini et al, Quitting smoking at or around diagnosis improves the overall survival of lung cancer patients: a systematic review and meta-analysis, *Journal of Thoracic Oncology* (2022). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jtho.2021.12.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtho.2021.12.005)

Provided by International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer

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