

Reproductive factors associated with higher risk of lung cancer in women

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A study presented at the [International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer](#) 2023 World Conference on Lung Cancer revealed that key reproductive factors such as early menopause, shortened reproductive

span, and early age at first birth are associated with elevated risks of lung cancer in women.

Researchers from Xiangya Hospital, Changsha, Hunan, China, conducted a [prospective cohort study](#) involving 273,190 participants from the UK Biobank to delve into the links between individual reproductive factors and the risk of developing [lung cancer](#). The study sought to identify potential risk factors and further analyze their impact on specific subgroups, including age, smoking status, body mass index (BMI), genetic risk, and histological subtypes.

Over a median follow-up period of 12.0 years, the cohort study recorded 1,182 lung cancer cases in women.

According to the researchers, several reproductive factors showed a significant association with a higher risk of incident lung cancer among women. These factors included early menarche (age ≤ 11 years), early menopause (age ≤ 46 years or age of 47–49 years), a shorter reproductive span (age ≤ 32 years or age of 33–35 years), and early age at first birth (≤ 20 years or age of 21–25 years).

Stratified analysis revealed that some reproductive factors, especially early menopause, shortened reproductive span, and early age at first birth, displayed a substantially stronger association with elevated lung cancer risk, particularly [non-small cell lung cancer](#) (NSCLC), in populations with high genetic susceptibility and detrimental behaviors.

"These findings are of paramount importance in our understanding of the potential risk factors for lung cancer among women," said the lead researcher, Dr. Y. Zhang from Xiangya Hospital, Central South University. "Early menarche, [early menopause](#), and a shortened reproductive life span are associated with higher risks of incident lung cancer, especially NSCLC, in subpopulations with specific genetic risk

and lifestyle choices."

This pioneering research emphasizes the importance of screening multiple reproductive factors in identifying potential lung cancer risk among female populations. By understanding these associations, [health care professionals](#) can develop targeted preventive strategies and interventions to combat lung cancer effectively, Dr. Zhang reported.

Provided by International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer

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