

Lung Cancer Advancements Are Saving More Lives Than Ever, but Funding Cuts May Hinder Progress

American Lung Association's 'State of Lung Cancer' report reveals new national lung cancer data, calls on states to ensure access to care.

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Today [November 4], the [American Lung Association](#) released its [2025 "State of Lung Cancer" report](#), which reveals great strides in efforts to end lung cancer—the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S. This year, nearly 227,000 people in the U.S. will be diagnosed with lung cancer. The good news is that physicians are detecting lung cancer earlier when it is more likely to be curable, and people are living longer after diagnosis.

The Lung Association's eighth annual "State of Lung Cancer" report highlights how the toll of lung cancer varies by state and examines key indicators throughout the U.S., including new cases, survival, early diagnosis, surgical treatment, lack of treatment, screening rates and coverage of comprehensive biomarker testing.

The positive trends detailed in the "State of Lung Cancer" report depend on the vital work of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as ensuring people have access to lung cancer screening and treatment through quality, affordable healthcare coverage. Recent funding and staffing cuts to NIH and CDC, along with deep cuts to Medicaid and Affordable Care Act coverage, threaten this progress.

"I have worked at the American Lung Association for more than 40 years, and it is incredible to see how advancements in research and early detection have completely changed what it means to be diagnosed with lung cancer," said Harold Wimmer, president and CEO of the American Lung Association. "In just the past eight years since we launched this report, the five-year survival rate has gone from 18% to nearly 30%. This is important progress and offers hope against a disease that is absolutely devastating to too many families across the U.S."

Wimmer added: "CDC is critical in helping to prevent lung cancer by funding programs to prevent tobacco use and help people quit, and the research done at NIH has led to 73 new treatments for lung cancer in the last decade alone. The cuts to programs and research are devastating. Lives hang in the balance—we must keep up the momentum."

The report shows progress in coverage of comprehensive biomarker testing for lung cancer, which can help physicians identify better, more targeted treatment options with fewer side effects. Insurance coverage of this testing is important for removing a cost barrier. Since last year's report, two additional states, New Jersey and Connecticut, passed laws to cover comprehensive biomarker testing. In total, 17 states require coverage for comprehensive biomarker testing, five states require some coverage, and 28 states and Washington, D.C., have yet to require any coverage of biomarker testing.

In addition to comprehensive biomarker testing, the 2025 "State of Lung Cancer" report details national and state trends in the following key indicators:

- **New Cases:** Close to 227,000 people will be diagnosed with lung cancer this year, with the rate of new cases varying by state. The report finds that Utah has the nation's lowest lung cancer incidence rate while Kentucky has the highest, at more than 2.3 times the incidence rate of Utah.
- **Survival Rate:** Lung cancer has one of the lowest five-year survival rates because cases are often diagnosed at later stages, when it is less likely to be curable. The national average of people alive five years after a lung cancer diagnosis is 29.7%. Survival rates were best in Rhode Island (37.6%) and worst in Alabama (22.7%).
- **Early Diagnosis:** Nationally, only 28.1% of cases are diagnosed at an early stage when the five-year survival rate is much higher (65%). Unfortunately, 43% of cases are not caught until a late stage when the survival rate is only 10%. Early diagnosis rates were best in Rhode Island (35.5%), and worst in Hawaii (21.8%).
- **Lung Cancer Screening:** Lung cancer screening with annual low-dose CT scans for those at high risk can reduce the lung cancer death rate by up to 20%. Nationally, only 18.2% of those at high risk were screened. Lung cancer screening rates were the best in Rhode Island (31%) and the worst in Wyoming (9.7%).
- **Surgery as First Course of Treatment:** Lung cancer can often be treated with surgery if it is diagnosed at an early stage and has not spread. Nationally, 20.7% of cases underwent surgery. Surgical treatment rates did not change over the previous five years, likely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on access to medical care.
- **Lack of Treatment:** There are multiple reasons why patients may not receive treatment after

diagnosis. Some of these reasons may be unavoidable, but no one should go untreated because of lack of provider or patient knowledge, stigma associated with lung cancer, fatalism after diagnosis or cost of treatment. Nationally, 21% of cases receive no treatment. Lack of treatment rates were highest in Nevada (36.9%), and lowest in Massachusetts (13.2%).

The report also reveals differences in lung cancer outcomes among communities. Compared to white individuals, who have a survival rate of 28.6%, survival rates are significantly lower among Black individuals at 24.9% and Indigenous people at 22.8%. Overall, the report finds that people of color who are diagnosed with lung cancer are less likely to be diagnosed early, less likely to receive surgical treatment and more likely to receive no treatment.

It is critical for states to ensure their residents have access to the best lung cancer care. The American Lung Association is calling for all states to implement policies to require insurance coverage of comprehensive biomarker testing. Learn more about the report and take action at [Lung.org/solc](https://lung.org/solc).

This [news release](#) was published by the American Lung Association on November 4, 2025.

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<http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/lung-cancer-advancements-saving-lives-ever-funding-cuts-may-hinder-progress>