

Perspectives from the Lung Cancer Community

for you and your non-small cell lung cancer treatment

I am feeling overwhelmed by my diagnosis, and the next steps are unclear.

A simple way of understanding in the beginning of your journey is through defining terminology. Lung cancer is like a whole new language that needs to be learned, so here are a few basics:

What is a mutation?

A change that comes from damage to the genes of a particular cell.¹

What makes cancer grow?

Mutations in cancer cells interfere with the normal instructions in a cell and can cause it to grow out of control or not die when it should.²

What are different types of treatments and what do they mean?³



Surgery



Chemotherapy



Radiation therapy



Targeted therapy

Ivy Elkins • [@ivybelkins](#)

I am hearing about many different treatment types. How do my healthcare team and I decide what is right for me?

“A helpful first step is next generation sequencing testing (NGS). NGS testing gives us the most adequate genomic picture of a tumor, so that we can make the most important initial therapeutic decision.”

Dr. Lopes • [@GlopesMd](#)

I’m beginning my first treatment and I’m uncertain about the path that lies ahead.

“You don’t know what you don’t know. That’s what’s so overwhelming at first. Anxiety and distress cloud your ability to comprehend, and you need to ask for help to understand.”

Jill Feldman • [@jillfeldman4](#)

“It may be hard to face your truth, but the greatest gift you could give yourself is to learn your truth and lean into it as it is fuel for your survival journey, and therapy is a must in finding that truth.”

Nichelle Stigger • [@NichelleStigger](#)

I am already juggling so many responsibilities and am concerned about managing my treatment.

“A lot of times, it’s hard to know what you need at first. Being connected with a patient navigator allows you to explore all of the things you may need.”

Dr. Tung Nguyen • [@ARCHDrNguyen](#)

“As a patient of color, I encourage other patients of color to push themselves to have a seat at the table and take their health into their own hands, educate themselves, and partner with a patient navigator. Also, seeking therapy is a must.”

Nichelle Stigger • [@NichelleStigger](#)

Patient navigators work with people, their families, and their care partners to overcome challenges to cancer screening and diagnosis, cancer care, and resources needed after cancer treatment.⁴ This can include:

- **Lack of transportation**
- **Lack of childcare**
- **Speaking a different language**
- **Lack of health insurance**

Participants have received honoraria from Janssen Biotech, Inc.

¹<https://www.cancer.net/navigating-cancer-care/cancer-basics/genetics/genetics-cancer>

²<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/4375-lung-cancer>

³https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/lung/basic_info/diagnosis_treatment.htm

⁴<https://www.cdc.gov/screenoutcancer/patient-navigation.htm>