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LUNG CANCER SURVIVAL RATES RISE WITH EARLY DETECTION

November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month

November 11 2021 – According to the American Lung Association, every two and a half minutes, someone in the U.S. is diagnosed with lung cancer, and four in five of those diagnosed will ultimately die from the disease.

The good news is that more Americans than ever are surviving lung cancer. The disease remains the leading cause of cancer deaths among both women and men, but the survival rates have continued to increase dramatically.

“The key to cancer survival rates is early detection,” said Dennis Tishko, M.D., director of thoracic oncology at Broward Health. “That means continuing to remain vigilant with your screenings.”

Most people believe that they will never be diagnosed with lung cancer because ‘only smokers get lung cancer.’ The fact is that non-smokers can and do get lung cancer and the rate of that appears to be increasing. About 20% of all lung cancer occurs in those who have never smoked and who have no risk factors. However, smoking, whether it’s tobacco or marijuana, is the number one risk factor for lung cancer, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with cigarette smoking linked to 80 to 90% of lung cancer deaths.

With a late diagnosis, lung cancer is very difficult to treat, and survival is not nearly as good compared to when lung cancer is diagnosed in its earliest stages.

“If caught early, lung cancer can be curable in more than 95% of cases,” said Dr. Tishko. “Surgical removal of early-stage lung cancers can be extremely effective with excellent results.”

Lung cancer screenings are highly effective at finding early cancers. The screening test is a quick, 4-second CAT scan of the lungs. No contrast is used, so there are no needles, no pain and very low X-ray exposure. In addition, these screenings are covered by virtually all insurances.

“Education is key to saving lives,” adds Dr. Tishko. “If patients don’t get screened, that causes delays in diagnoses and treatment and ultimately leads to lower survival rates. But it’s also never too late to quit smoking, if not for yourself, then for your loved ones.”

At Broward Health a multidisciplinary team of surgeons, oncologists, radiation oncologists and specialists diagnose and treat lung cancer. A Broward Health Nurse Connect

representative can perform the initial screening for all patients who call the 954-355-LUNG line or patients can qualify from taking the online assessment at BrowardHealth.org/LungCancer.

For more information, visit BrowardHealth.org/BeatCancer.

About Broward Health

Broward Health, providing service for more than 80 years, is a nationally recognized system in South Florida that offers world-class healthcare to all. The Broward Health system includes the statutory teaching hospital Broward Health Medical Center, Broward Health North, Broward Health Imperial Point, Broward Health Coral Springs, Salah Foundation Children's Hospital, Broward Health Weston, Broward Health Community Health Services, Broward Health Physician Group, Broward Health Urgent Care, Broward Health International, and Broward Health Foundation. For more information, visit BrowardHealth.org.

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