

Smoking, secondhand smoke leading causes of lung cancer

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LUNG cancer ranked second among the most common type of the disease in the Philippines and is the leading cause of mortality in the country among all types of cancer, recent data from Globocan 2020, the online database of Global cancer observatory (Gco), showed.

According to Globocan 2020, lung cancer ranked second among the most common type of the disease in the Philippines after recording a total of 19,180 or 12.5 percent of the total 153,751 new cases in both males and females in all age groups in 2020. Breast cancer ranked first with 27,163 new cases last year.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of mortality among all types of cancer in the country in 2020, recording 17,063 cases.

in observance of national Lung cancer Awareness Month every november with the theme “Kalaaman sa Kanser sa Baga Palawakin, Pag iwas at Lunas Ating Alamin,” the Department of health (Doh) strongly advised people to stop smoking as research disclosed that smoking and secondhand smoke continue to be the leading cause of lung cancer.

“Aside from lung cancer that one gets due to smoking, it weakens the immune system which is also a big factor for survival if one becomes infected with Covid-19,” health Secretary Francisco T. Duque, iii explained.

Smokers are more likely to develop lung cancer compared to non-smokers. overall, smoking has been linked to cancers of the mouth, larynx, pharynx, esophagus, pancreas and bladder, the Doh said.

Healthy lungs

HEALTH Justice Philippines, a non-government organization, stressed the importance of keeping the lungs healthy and strong.

Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan, a trustee of healthjustice Philippines, said that “we should not take our lungs for granted.”

“For your overall health, it is important to have healthy lungs. That is why it is necessary that you prioritize your lung health,” said Dr. Galvez Tan, who is also a former health secretary.

“Also, smokers should quit as smoking is the major cause of lung cancer,” he stressed adding that smoking also cause chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or copd, which includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

To achieve healthy lungs, Dr. Galvez Tan said that one should avoid exposure to secondhand smoke, indoor pollutants like chemicals, outdoor pollutants, and cold or other respiratory infections.

“Visit your doctor regularly to prevent diseases, eat healthy food and exercise for being physically active can help keep your lungs healthy,” Dr. Galvez Tan concluded.

Duque added that there are several risk factors that may increase the chances of getting lung cancer. These include smoking, secondhand smoke, and other substances found at workplaces like asbestos, arsenic, diesel exhaust, and some forms of silica and chromium.

Also, family history, radiation therapy to the chest, diet, and lifestyle may also contribute to acquiring the disease.