CuraScriptSD

UNDERSTANDING RADON GAS EXPOSURE

Radon Exposure is the Second Leading Cause of Lung Cancer

Unsafe Levels of Radon Have Been Found In Houses in Every State

Radon gas is a dangerous element that can be harming your body, specifically your lungs, without you even knowing it. Unfortunately many people will not know they are suffering from exposure until they have severe damage or cancer of the lungs. It is important to understand what radon is and its role it plays in lung cancer.

Please use this guide as a resource for knowledge and understanding of radon gas exposure health effects, symptoms and prevention.

01 | Causes
Radon is a radioactive gas released from the normal decay of the elements uranium, thorium, and radium in rocks and soil. It is an invisible, odorless, tasteless gas that seeps up through the ground and diffuses into the air. In a few areas, depending on local geology, radon dissolves into ground water and can be released into the air when the water is used. Radon gas usually exists at very low levels outdoors. However, in areas without adequate ventilation, such as underground mines, radon can accumulate to levels that substantially increase the risk of lung cancer.

02 | Health Effects
Radon decays quickly, giving off tiny radioactive particles. When inhaled, these radioactive particles can damage the cells that line the lung. Long-term exposure to radon can lead to lung cancer, the only cancer proven to be associated with inhaling radon.

03 | Symptoms
It is important to be aware of possible symptoms of lung cancer, such as shortness of breath, a new or worsening cough, pain or tightness in the chest, hoarseness, or trouble swallowing. Tell your doctor if you start to have any of these symptoms.

04 | Prevention
Testing the air in your home is critical piece in reducing exposure to radon. Do-it-yourself short-term tests typically take two to seven days. During this time the kit, will be placed in a common area and absorb or track radon from the building. Once the testing period is complete, test containers are sealed and sent to a laboratory for analysis. In a matter of weeks, you can be notified of the radon level in your home.

Long-term tests tend to be more accurate. They take at least three months and can measure long-term averages. If you don't want to wait for a long-term test, short-term tests are a good way to indicate if your home has a problem and requires follow-up testing. Two short-term tests back to back may be a good way to determine whether you need to take action.

Special air filter systems are available to those who have high levels of the gas in their home. Properly sealing your home is a key factor in preventing elevated levels in the home and is the most immediate preventative measure. The EPA recommends taking action to reduce radon levels indoors if concentrations exceed 4 picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L). If you are working in mines or an office underground you could be at greater risk for exposure. You have the right to ask your office facilities manager what precautions are being taken and if they tests for radon levels.

For more information on lung cancer and other oncological conditions, please visit:
http://www.cancer.org/

Did You Know?
It is impossible to avoid radon completely

References
https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/substances/radon/radon-fact-sheet

http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/othercarcinogens/pollution/radon