

FEASIBILITY STUDY OF RISK FACTORS FOR LUNG CANCER AMONG WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

In the US, more women die from lung cancer than breast cancer. Most lung cancers are caused by smoking, but about 15% of cases are believed to be among nonsmokers. Scientists do not currently understand what causes lung cancer among nonsmokers, although some believe that environmental and genetic factors may be responsible.



AIMS

We invited women to participate in our study who had been diagnosed with lung cancer and who had contact information in the Cancer Registry of Greater California's data base.

The study was funded by the University of California, Davis National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Core Center for Environmental Health.

STUDY PARTICIPANTS

We interviewed 11 women who had been diagnosed with lung cancer. Interviews were conducted by telephone by bilingual interviews in English and Spanish.

The study was approved by the Public Health Institute's Institutional Review Board.

RESULTS

Among the women who participated in our study, four had never smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime, which is how scientific studies typically measure cigarette exposure. We learned that it is possible to contact women who have been diagnosed with lung cancer to ask them about their history with smoking. We hope to use these findings to obtain future funding from governmental agencies, foundations, and other sources to study why women get lung cancer even if they have never been smokers.

