



Dr Ian Watson



**Coughing
for 3 weeks?**

**Get out of
breath easily?**

Do you know or look after someone over 50?
Tell them that if they have been coughing for over 3 weeks
or get out of breath easily they should see their doctor.

- **Older people are most at risk of heart disease, lung cancer and COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease – the name for a group of lung diseases including chronic bronchitis and emphysema).**
- **Early diagnosis makes these conditions more treatable. We need your help to make sure people know that if they have a persistent cough or get out of breath doing things they used to be able to do, they should see their doctor.**
- **With your help, lives could be saved.**

A cough that has lasted three weeks or more, or getting out of breath doing everyday things like light housework or climbing a short flight of stairs, could be a sign of lung disease, including lung cancer and COPD. Breathlessness can be a sign of heart disease as well.

Diagnosing these conditions early makes them more treatable and can save lives. Earlier diagnosis can also help improve the quality of life of people living with long-term conditions such as COPD.

So, it is important we all play our part to make sure people know that if anyone has these symptoms they should see their doctor.

From 18th May, *Be Clear on Cancer* adverts will appear on TV, print, radio, posters and online to encourage people with symptoms to visit their doctor, but we need your help too.

We know that people listen to advice from friends, family, carers and people they trust when deciding if symptoms are serious enough to see their GP.

What can you do to help?

You don't need to give medical advice to help people you know and care for - just talking about symptoms can have a big impact.

If you notice someone has either of these symptoms, encourage them to see their doctor. Give special consideration to those who may have problems recognising symptoms or who may need assistance to make an appointment, such as those with dementia or learning disabilities.

More information

There is a *Be Clear on Cancer* leaflet and a symptom flyer that give more information on the symptoms of lung and heart disease and lung cancer. You may see the leaflet in your local pharmacy or GP practice. It is also available in alternative formats by visiting the website nhs.uk/beclearoncancer or by sending an email to enquiries@phe.gov.uk.

"I would urge anybody with symptoms that might be lung cancer, like a persistent cough, to go and see their doctor straight away. I'm glad I did. I was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2003 and I can still do all the things I did before my treatment."

**Ann Long, aged 80,
Supporter of the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation**

nhs.uk/beclearoncancer