

AJCC Stage	Stage grouping	Stage description*
Occult (hidden) cancer	TX N0 M0	<p>The main tumor can't be assessed for some reason, or cancer cells are seen in a sample of sputum or other lung fluids, but the cancer isn't found with other tests, so its location can't be determined (TX). The cancer is not thought to have spread to nearby lymph nodes (N0) or to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
0	Tis N0 M0	<p>The tumor is found only in the top layers of cells lining the air passages, but it has not invaded deeper into other lung tissues (Tis). The cancer has not spread to nearby lymph nodes (N0) or to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
IA1	T1mi N0 M0	<p>The cancer is a <i>minimally invasive adenocarcinoma</i>. The tumor is no larger than 3 centimeters (cm) across, and the part that has invaded into deeper lung tissues is no more than ½ cm across. The cancer has not spread to nearby lymph nodes (N0) or to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
	OR	
	T1a N0 M0	<p>The tumor is no larger than 1 cm across, it has not reached the membranes that surround the lungs, and it does not affect the main branches of the bronchi (T1a). The cancer has not spread to nearby lymph nodes (N0) or to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
IA2	T1b	<p>The tumor is larger than 1 cm but no larger than 2 cm across. It has not reached the membranes that surround the lungs, and it does not affect the main branches of the</p>

	N0 M0	bronchi (T1b). The cancer has not spread to nearby lymph nodes (N0) or to distant parts of the body (M0).
IA3	T1c N0 M0	The tumor is larger than 2 cm but no larger than 3 cm across. It has not reached the membranes that surround the lungs, and it does not affect the main branches of the bronchi (T1c). The cancer has not spread to nearby lymph nodes (N0) or to distant parts of the body (M0).
IB	T2a N0 M0	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T2a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 3 cm but not larger than 4 cm across. • It has grown into a main bronchus, but is not within 2 cm of the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right main bronchi) and it is not larger than 4 cm across. • It has grown into the visceral pleura (the membranes surrounding the lungs) and is not larger than 4 cm across. • It is partially clogging the airways (and is not larger than 4 cm across). <p>The cancer has not spread to nearby lymph nodes (N0) or to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
IIA	T2b N0 M0	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T2b):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 4 cm but not larger than 5 cm across. • It has grown into a main bronchus, but is not within 2 cm of the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right main bronchi) and it is larger than 4 cm but not larger than 5 cm across.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tumor has grown into the visceral pleura (the membranes surrounding the lungs) and is larger than 4 cm but not larger than 5 cm across. • The tumor is partially clogging the airways (and is larger than 4 cm but not larger than 5 cm across). <p>The cancer has not spread to nearby lymph nodes (N0) or to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
IIB	<p>T1a/T1b/T1c</p> <p>N1</p> <p>M0</p>	<p>The tumor is no larger than 3 cm across, has not grown into the membranes that surround the lungs, and does not affect the main branches of the bronchi (T1). It has spread to lymph nodes within the lung and/or around the area where the bronchus enters the lung (hilar lymph nodes). These lymph nodes are on the same side as the cancer (N1). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
	<p>OR</p>	
	<p>T2a/T2b</p> <p>N1</p> <p>M0</p>	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 3 cm but not larger than 5 cm across. • It has grown into a main bronchus, but is not within 2 cm of the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right main bronchi) and it is not larger than 5 cm across. • It has grown into the visceral pleura (the membranes surrounding the lungs) and is not larger than 5 cm. • It is partially clogging the airways (and is not larger than 5 cm). <p>The cancer has also spread to lymph nodes within the lung and/or around the area where the bronchus enters the lung (hilar lymph nodes). These lymph nodes are on the same</p>

		side as the cancer (N1). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).
	OR	
	T3 N0 M0	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 5 cm but not larger than 7 cm across. • It has grown into the chest wall, the inner lining of the chest wall (parietal pleura), the phrenic nerve, or membranes of the sac surrounding the heart (parietal pericardium). • There are 2 or more separate tumor nodules in the same lobe of a lung. <p>The cancer has not spread to nearby lymph nodes (N0) or distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
IIIA	T1a/T1b/T1c N2 M0	<p>The cancer is no larger than 3 cm across, has not grown into the membranes that surround the lungs, and does not affect the main branches of the bronchi (T1). The cancer has spread to lymph nodes around the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right bronchi) or in the space between the lungs (mediastinum). These lymph nodes are on the same side as the main lung tumor (N2). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
	OR	
	T2a/T2b	The tumor has one or more of the following features (T2):

	<p>N2</p> <p>M0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 3 cm but not larger than 5 cm across. • It has grown into a main bronchus, but is not within 2 cm of the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right main bronchi) and it is not larger than 5 cm across. • It has grown into the visceral pleura (the membranes surrounding the lungs) and is not larger than 5 cm. • It is partially clogging the airways (and is not larger than 5 cm). <p>The cancer has spread to lymph nodes around the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right bronchi) or in the space between the lungs (mediastinum). These lymph nodes are on the same side as the main lung tumor (N2). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
OR		
	<p>T3</p> <p>N1</p> <p>M0</p>	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 5 cm but not larger than 7 cm across. • It has grown into the chest wall, the inner lining of the chest wall (parietal pleura), the phrenic nerve, or membranes of the sac surrounding the heart (parietal pericardium). • There are 2 or more separate tumor nodules in the same lobe of a lung. <p>The cancer has also spread to lymph nodes within the lung and/or around the area where the bronchus enters the lung (hilar lymph nodes). These lymph nodes are on the same side as the cancer (N1). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>

	OR	
	<p style="text-align: center;">T4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">N0 or N1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">M1</p>	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 7 cm across. • It has grown into the space between the lungs (mediastinum), the heart, the large blood vessels near the heart (such as the aorta), the windpipe (trachea), the tube connecting the throat to the stomach (esophagus), the thin muscle separating the chest from the abdomen (diaphragm), the backbone, or the carina. • There are 2 or more separate tumor nodules in different lobes of the same lung. <p>The cancer may or may not have spread to lymph nodes within the lung and/or around the area where the bronchus enters the lung (hilar lymph nodes). Any affected lymph nodes are on the same side as the cancer (N0 or N1). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">T1a/T1b/T1c</p> <p style="text-align: center;">N3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">M0</p>	<p>The cancer is no larger than 3 cm across, has not grown into the membranes that surround the lungs, and does not affect the main branches of the bronchi (T1). The cancer has spread to lymph nodes near the collarbone on either side of the body, and/or has spread to hilar or mediastinal lymph nodes on the other side of the body from the main tumor (N3). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
	OR	
	<p style="text-align: center;">T2a/T2b</p> <p style="text-align: center;">N3</p>	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 3 cm but not larger than 5 cm across.

IIIB	M0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has grown into a main bronchus, but is not within 2 cm of the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right main bronchi) and it is not larger than 5 cm across. • It has grown into the visceral pleura (the membranes surrounding the lungs) and is not larger than 5 cm. • It is partially clogging the airways (and is not larger than 5 cm). <p>The cancer has spread to lymph nodes near the collarbone on either side of the body, and/or has spread to hilar or mediastinal lymph nodes on the other side of the body from the main tumor (N3). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
	OR	
	T3 N2 M0	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 5 cm but not larger than 7 cm across. • It has grown into the chest wall, the inner lining of the chest wall (parietal pleura), the phrenic nerve, or membranes of the sac surrounding the heart (parietal pericardium). • There are 2 or more separate tumor nodules in the same lobe of a lung. <p>The cancer has spread to lymph nodes around the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right bronchi) or in the space between the lungs (mediastinum). These lymph nodes are on the same side as the main lung tumor (N2). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
OR		

	<p>T4</p> <p>N2</p> <p>M0</p>	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 7 cm across. • It has grown into the space between the lungs (mediastinum), the heart, the large blood vessels near the heart (such as the aorta), the windpipe (trachea), the tube connecting the throat to the stomach (esophagus), the thin muscle separating the chest from the abdomen (diaphragm), the backbone, or the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right main bronchi). • There are 2 or more separate tumor nodules in different lobes of the same lung. <p>The cancer has spread to lymph nodes around the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right bronchi) or in the space between the lungs (mediastinum). These lymph nodes are on the same side as the main lung tumor (N2). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
<p>IIIC</p>	<p>T3</p> <p>N3</p> <p>M0</p>	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 5 cm but not larger than 7 cm across. • It has grown into the chest wall, the inner lining of the chest wall (parietal pleura), the phrenic nerve, or membranes of the sac surrounding the heart (parietal pericardium). • There are 2 or more separate tumor nodules in the same lobe of a lung. <p>The cancer has spread to lymph nodes near the collarbone on either side of the body, and/or has spread to hilar or mediastinal lymph nodes on the other side of the body from the main tumor (N3). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>

	OR	
	<p>T4</p> <p>N3</p> <p>M0</p>	<p>The tumor has one or more of the following features (T4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is larger than 7 cm across. • It has grown into the space between the lungs (mediastinum), the heart, the large blood vessels near the heart (such as the aorta), the windpipe (trachea), the tube connecting the throat to the stomach (esophagus), the thin muscle separating the chest from the abdomen (diaphragm), the backbone (spine), or the carina (the point where the windpipe splits into the left and right main bronchi). • There are 2 or more separate tumor nodules in different lobes of the same lung. <p>The cancer has spread to lymph nodes near the collarbone on either side of the body, and/or has spread to hilar or mediastinal lymph nodes on the other side of the body from the main tumor (N3). The cancer has not spread to distant parts of the body (M0).</p>
IVA	<p>Any T</p> <p>Any N</p> <p>M1a</p>	<p>The cancer can be any size and may or may not have grown into nearby structures (any T). It may or may not have reached nearby lymph nodes (any N). In addition, any of the following is true (M1a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cancer has spread to the other lung. • Cancer cells are found in the fluid around the lung (called a <i>malignant pleural effusion</i>). • Cancer cells are found in the fluid around the heart (called a <i>malignant pericardial effusion</i>).
	OR	

	<p>Any T</p> <p>Any N</p> <p>M1b</p>	<p>The cancer can be any size and may or may not have grown into nearby structures (any T). It may or may not have reached nearby lymph nodes (any N). It has spread as a single tumor outside of the chest, such as to a distant lymph node or an organ such as the liver, bones, or brain (M1b).</p>
IVB	<p>Any T</p> <p>Any N</p> <p>M1c</p>	<p>The cancer can be any size and may or may not have grown into nearby structures (any T). It may or may not have reached nearby lymph nodes (any N). It has spread as more than one tumor outside the chest, such as to distant lymph nodes and/or to other organs such as the liver, bones, or brain (M1c).</p>

*The following additional categories are not listed in the table above:

T0: There is no evidence of a primary tumor.

NX: Nearby lymph nodes cannot be assessed due to lack of information.

<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/non-small-cell-lung-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/staging.html>