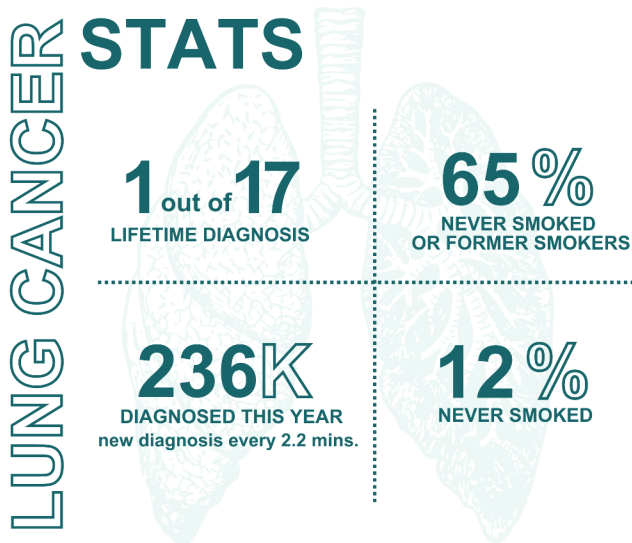


# NORTH BIRMINGHAM MATTERS

## November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month

The UAB's Community Engagement Core wants to direct your attention to some important information on lung cancer.



Lung cancer is the leading cause of death in both men and women in Alabama.

- 25% of all cancer deaths are lung cancer.
- Only 23% of all people diagnosed with lung cancer will survive 5 years or more, but if it's caught before it spreads, the chance for 5 year survival improves dramatically.

### Who Should Be Screened for Lung Cancer?

Screening means testing for a disease when there are no symptoms or history of that disease. Doctors recommend a screening test to find a disease early, when treatment may work better. The only recommended screening test for lung cancer is low-dose computed tomography (also called a low-dose CT scan, or LDCT).

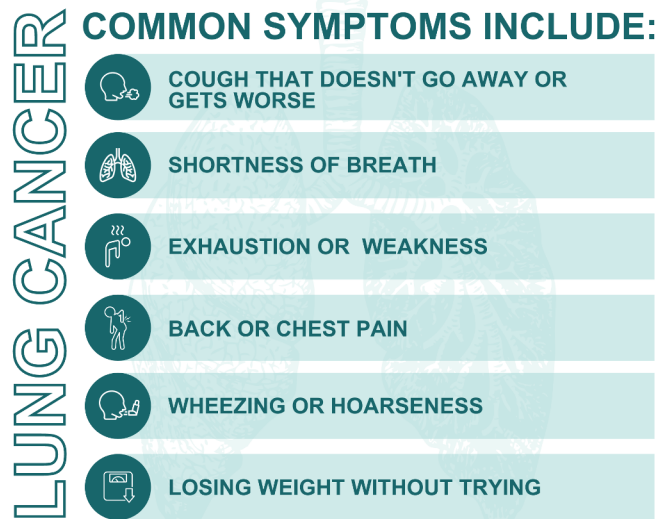
The current recommendations for lung cancer is annual LDCT in individuals at high risk:

- 50-80 years old
- Have at least a 20-pack year smoking history
- Are currently smoking or quit within the past 15 years

During an LDCT scan, you lie on a table and an X-ray machine uses a low dose (amount) of radiation to make detailed images of your lungs. The scan only takes a few minutes and is not painful. Talk to your doctor for more information and if you are eligible for the scan.

The two leading causes of lung cancer are tobacco use and radon exposure. You can help lower your risk:

- Don't smoke
- Avoid secondhand smoke
- Get your home tested for radon
- Be careful at work



Content source: Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control Prevention

## Keisha Brown: A Voice and a Hand for Harriman Park



As a child, Keisha Brown attended neighborhood meetings at the Harriman Park Community Center with her grandparents, so when it came time for her to help improve things in her neighborhood, it came natural.

Even with challenges happening at every corner, Brown remains undeterred in her advocacy for Harriman Park and optimism for better days. "You've got to get that mentality in your head and say, 'I want better for my family and for my community,'" she said. "People who live in the community should be the ones who are there at the table. I have a voice, and if you don't go with me I'm going to go by myself."

Brown has served in several positions in the Harriman Park Association, including vice president.

She is also a member of four community organizations as both an active voice and a helping hand for neighbors in her community.

Brown's activism includes working with groups calling for environmental justice and new policies to benefit Harriman Park and the entire North Birmingham Community. She's a longtime member of GASP, a non-profit health environmental advocacy organization fighting for healthy air quality. Brown is also a frequent present and organizer at regular pop-up markets where food and personal items are distributed to neighbors, many of whom have been impacted by the pandemic. "It's just a blessing to be a person who can be there to help," she said. "I don't have these resources, but I can tie in with other people with resources who can help."

## Melodie Agnew: Continuing A Legacy of Civic Engagement



Since she was a child, Melodie Agnew was instilled with lessons of community pride and a responsibility to give back and reach back. Agnew's mother led the family businesses passed down from her great-grandfather and grandfather.

"Watching her, I saw firsthand the importance of not only providing services to the community, but also being an active and contributing member of that community," she said.

Agnew's own interest and personal dedication led her to become a community development consultant helping nonprofit agencies whose mission aligns with serving under-served communities.

"Efforts to improve the lives of residents are intentional and planned. I saw this happen in Norwood, and there's no reason that this and even more could not occur in the North Birmingham Community," Agnew explained.

Agnew said her approach to community development involves partnering and investing in the most important asset of a community—its people. Meaningful improvements occur when relationships are created, trust is solidified and residents themselves lead the conversations about what is needed.

"Every person living in the city of Birmingham deserves a safe and healthy quality of life," she said.

*Community Advisory Board Members: Charmell Hicks, Barbara Goudy Thomas, Chris Mosley, Omar Harvill, Keisha Brown, Melodie Agnew, Jimmy Coleman, Chester Wallace, Letitia Collins, and Sharron Barkley.*

## Rep. Sewell Announces \$3 Million for the North Birmingham Community Development Rehabilitation Project

On September 9, 2022, U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell (AL-07) was joined by Birmingham Mayor Randall Woodfin and state and local officials to announce \$3 million in federal funding for the North Birmingham Community Development Rehabilitation Project. At a press conference this morning, Rep. Sewell delivered this financial assistance—which she secured in the Fiscal Year 2022 Government Funding Package—to the City of Birmingham via a check for \$3 million. It will be used to redevelop the former North Birmingham Elementary School and address long-standing environmental concerns.

"This community has suffered from environmental injustice for far too long, and the people of North Birmingham know just how critical it is that we invest in clean-up and revitalization," Sewell said.



## A New Study Coming to North Birmingham

Arsenic is a natural chemical found in the earth. Active coke plants, coal furnaces and steel mills contaminate air and soil with arsenic. Long term arsenic exposure is a public health concern and has been linked to cancers, lung disease, heart disease, and brain disorders.

Residents of North Birmingham have high levels of arsenic in their blood and urine. Studies have shown that folic acid (vitamin B9) can increase the removal of arsenic from the body via urine. Folic acid is safe, and every pregnant woman is recommended to take folic acid supplementation.

As part of the effort to protect residents from the effects of long-term arsenic exposure, the UAB Superfund Research Center wants to study if folic acid supplementation can help protect residents from arsenic. For this proposed study, we will enroll 100 participants in the study. Blood and urine

samples will be tested for arsenic levels and the participants will get either folic acid or a placebo, for a period of 90 days. After 90 days, blood and urine will be tested for arsenic again to check if folic acid helped increase arsenic removal from participants in the folic acid group. After the study, all participants will have access to a further 90-day supply of folic acid.

This study is an important step for the residents of Acipco-Finley, Collegeville, Fairmont, Harriman Park, Hooper City, and North Birmingham as it helps explore methods to limit exposure to toxic arsenic despite living in areas with high arsenic contamination.

***Participants will be reimbursed for enrolling in the study.***


Division of Preventive Medicine  
UAB Superfund Community Engagement Core  
MT 518B • 1717 11th Avenue South  
1720 2nd Avenue South  
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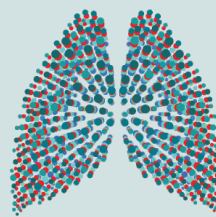
 PROJECT 1: Pollution & Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

 PROJECT 2: Asthma in Children Exposed to Pollution

 PROJECT 3: Pollution & Lower Respiratory Tract Infections

 PROJECT 4: Measuring Toxic Particles with Laser Technology

 PROJECT 5: Using Natural Materials to Clean Soil Contamination



# UAB SRC

North Birmingham Matters wants to share items of interest to you. Please submit your story ideas for consideration.

Contact: Sharonda Hardy (205) 934-1717  
sharonda@uab.edu

You can change the community by volunteering for SRC research projects.

- Must be 18 & up
- Compensation Provided, \$500
- Learn more about your health

Contact: Crystal Stephens (205) 975-3255  
ctstephens@uabmc.edu