

TRANSCRIPT OF MEDIA-Pope Leo's lung cancer highlights importance of knowing your risk and getting screened

Priya Andanamala, MD, a medical oncologist at the [OSF Cancer Institute](#) in Peoria

Dr. Andanamala says the pontiff's case underscores why people at increased risk should not put off screening.

"As sad as the news is, I think it encourages all of our patients that are under a high risk category to get that screening because if we are able to identify these lesions at an early stage, we are able to cure most patients. We're able to cure them with surgery and chemotherapy, immunotherapy and targeted therapy," Dr. Andanamala stresses.

Molecular profiling of lung nodule tissue allows for what she calls a more personalized approach to cancer care.

"Trying to determine what biomarkers the cancer has and understanding the molecular landscape. There are many different mutations that thankfully we have approved targeted therapy for that are highly effective so all of these can be found with comprehensive molecular profiling that we run on the surgical specimen." (:23)

Dr. Andanamala says medical providers at OSF HealthCare are also offering the First Look lung blood test at 49 locations as another way to help reach certain people at risk.

"It is currently not an alternative for a low-dose scan, but if this is something that is easier for patients to come in for, and if we're identifying something that is concerning, then typically we're following up with further testing." (:15)

Rachael Davis, MD, a physician at OSF HealthCare who specializes in lung conditions

Dr. Rachael Davis says people should also understand that finding a lung nodule does not automatically mean they have cancer.

"In the Midwest, many people have lung nodules that are not cancer." Dr. Davis explains, "There's a fungus in our soil called histoplasmosis that predisposes people to lung nodules so the rates of benign, meaning non-cancerous or not malignant, lung nodules is much higher in the Midwest than in other parts of the country." (:20)

Dr. Davis says people with a strong family history of lung cancer should discuss their circumstances with their primary care provider.

"Most cases of lung cancer are completely asymptomatic," Davis stresses. "There are no symptoms early, and so if we wait until there's symptoms in a patient, we've waited too long." (:10)

Dr. Davis says the minimally invasive procedure allows for a less painful and more accurate lung biopsies.

**"We're able to biopsy multiple lung nodules at the same time, during the same procedure, and reduce the need for the patient to come back for multiple procedures."
(:10)**