

We work to improve quality of life for people living with lung fibrosis.

**ILFA's mission** is to help individuals and families living with lung fibrosis, and the healthcare staff caring for them by providing evidence-based information, support and practical resources, by advocating for their needs, and contributing to awareness, education and research in Lung Fibrosis.

#### **Our Values:**

- People are at our heart
- We treat others with compassion
- We advocate for change



## **Support Our Work!**

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### **Patient and Caregiver Supports**

- Patient support line (Monday-Friday)
- Exercise classes three times per week
- Patient information and exercise packs
- Ecumenical service

### **Education**

- Patient information days
- Let's Talk sessions
- Conference bursaries for medical professionals and patients
- Specialty training and courses

### **Advocacy**

- Lobbying for equitable healthcare
- Lung fibrosis awareness month campaign

### **Research**

- Funding a broad array of research
- Ensuring patient voices are heard in research through the Patient Public Involvement (PPI) Group

# **Irish Lung Fibrosis Association**

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The Irish Lung Fibrosis Association supports patients and the lung fibrosis community with education, advocacy, research, and direct services. Lung Fibrosis (or pulmonary fibrosis) is a serious and life-limiting lung condition that occurs in adults.



**Irish Lung Fibrosis Association**  
[www.ilfa.ie](http://www.ilfa.ie)



## What is Lung Fibrosis

Idiopathic (unknown) Pulmonary (lungs) Fibrosis (scarring) or lung fibrosis is a chronic, life-limiting and progressive lung disease which causes scarring of the lungs.

**Lung Fibrosis usually occurs in people over the age of 50. It affects more men than women. It can sometimes develop in families which might mean a genetic link.**

Lungs are exposed to many particles, types of dust, chemicals and toxins. Healthy lungs repair the damage continuously, but lung fibrosis makes the repair process go out of control causing fibrosis. The lungs become stiff, making it harder for oxygen to get into the blood. Low oxygen levels cause shortness of breath and other symptoms.

Medicines and therapies can sometimes help slow down the rate of fibrosis, ease symptoms and improve quality of life. For some people, a lung transplant might be an option.

## Symptoms

- Shortness of breath, especially when going upstairs, walking, exercising or taking part in an activity.
- A dry cough.
- Low energy and fatigue.
- Changes in the shape of your fingertips. They may get bigger and more rounded. This is called 'clubbing'.
- Stomach acid and reflux (indigestion).

## Diagnosis

Your doctor will review your medical and family history and discuss your symptoms with you. You may be asked about any continuous or repeated contact with dusts, gases, chemicals or similar substances. During the physical exam, your doctor listens carefully to your lungs while you breathe. You may be referred for additional imaging (X-ray or CT scan), lung function tests, or a biopsy.

## Contact Us

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## Treatments

### Non-Pharmacological Treatments

- **Oxygen:** is one of the most important treatments. It will help your body cope better with the stress of the disease, and it will ease your breathlessness and fatigue.
- **Pulmonary rehabilitation:** is a specialist led exercise programme that teaches you about exercise, breathing methods, and how to manage anxiety and stress. It can improve lung function, increase exercise tolerance and improve your quality of life.
- **Palliative care:** focuses on relieving your symptoms, particularly breathlessness and anxiety. It will also support wellbeing and improve your quality of life.

### Pharmacological Treatments

- Pirfenidone (Esbriet) or Nintedanib (Ofev) may help slow the worsening of lung fibrosis and may prevent bouts when symptoms suddenly get worse.
- Steroids, also called corticosteroids, are medications that help control inflammation.
- Other medications, including those for pulmonary hypertension, a common complication with lung fibrosis.

**Lung transplant surgery is also an option for some patients.**