

# Lassies with Lungs urge women to be aware of cancer



A host of celebrities and sports persons have joined a campaign to raise awareness of lung cancer.

Scots including Edinburgh-born singer-songwriter Nina Nesbitt, 19, Judy Murray, 54, and Yvie Burnett, 45, have called on ladies to be more aware of lung cancer as the rate amongst women has risen by more than a quarter, with women aged 55 and over more at risk of the disease.

The team of women who rely on their lungs for their profession, have thrown their backing to the campaign as figures show that the incidence of lung cancer in women has increased by 28 per cent in the last 25 years in Scotland, whilst the figure has decreased by 41 per cent amongst men.

The Scottish celebrities are backing the drive to reduce the number of deaths from lung cancer in Scotland by urging people to be more conscious of any changes to their breathing, cough and chest and to visit their GP as soon as they can with any concerns.



'Stay Out' singer, Nina Nesbitt, said: "It's scary to hear that someone you love has cancer but everyday more and more people are surviving the disease. The key is to spot any signs as early as possible and see a doctor as soon as you can. If you are concerned about your lungs or those of a loved one, please don't ignore it. Our lungs are so important and we all need to fight this horrible disease together."

Judy Murray, Wimbledon champion Andy Murray's mum, is backing

the campaign as she is aware of how important our lungs are to our health. She said: "While it's scary to hear that lung cancer is Scotland's most common cancer, the disease is no longer a death sentence. When it's detected at an early stage, lung cancer can be treated. There have been huge advances in treatment that can help to extend life and improve the quality of it. If you have any worries about your lungs, breathing or chest, please see your GP at the earliest opportunity.

Former X Factor and The Voice vocal coach, Yvie Burnett knows how devastating it is to lose a parent to lung cancer – she lost her father to the disease. She explained: "Working with singers every day on breath control, I'm really aware of my lungs. I'm aware when I'm feeling unfit and I'm aware if I have a cough or something just doesn't feel right. Don't ignore feeling out of breath or having a cough that won't budge. Get to your GP and get checked as soon as you can.

Health Secretary Alex Neil said: "I am delighted that these inspirational women are backing our Detect Cancer Early programme and asking more women to make what could be a life-saving appointment with their doctor. I'm sure their stories say so much about the importance of being checked early.

"While lung cancer is the most common cancer in Scotland it is much more treatable than it used to be. The earlier it is detected the easier it is to treat and the better the chance of a successful outcome.

"Let's make 2014 the year that we do even more to improve survival rates from Scotland's most common cancer. Don't get scared, get checked."



Hugely successful Scottish sportswomen are also supporting the campaign. Olympic Gold Medallist, Dr Katherine Grainger CBE, added: "As an athlete I'm very aware that healthy lungs are vital for training and competition. Any small problem can

impact on my performance, so even a chest infection needs to be dealt with immediately to prevent more serious problems developing. Whilst crucial in sport, health awareness is equally important in our every day lives.

“A couple of years ago, the mother of a very good friend of mine was diagnosed with lung cancer and sadly passed away. It was understandably a very difficult time for the whole family. We all wish more could have been done earlier but the diagnosis came too late.

“The good news is that people do survive lung cancer and there have been huge advances in treatment that can help to extend or improve quality of life. Lung cancer is Scotland’s most common cancer but one of the main reasons death rates are still so high is because lung cancer is not being detected early enough. Please get any concerns checked as soon as possible and give yourself and your family the best chance.”

Racing driver Susie Wolff, 31, said: “Driving extremely fast cars can put a strain on your body, which means I have to be really focussed and in tune with my body and my breathing in particular. This means maintaining healthy lungs, being aware of their capacity and not ignoring anything that feels off. But this is true for everyone, our lungs play a massively vital role within our bodies and looking after them is so important. If you have any concerns then visit a GP straight away.”

Other celebrity supporters include television presenter Jenni Falconer, Olympic athlete Eilidh Child, Deacon Blue singer Lorraine McIntosh, and Eddi Reader.

Athlete Eilidh Child knows how important her lungs are to her sport. She said, “I absolutely rely on my lungs to do my job as an athlete so I know just how important it is to look after them. I wouldn’t be able to run as well even with the slightest infection to my lungs, so I’d advise anyone who is

worried about a change to their breathing or a cough, to go to their GP straight away. Being Scottish, I'm well aware that the impact lung cancer has on people. But being aware of any change to your chest and doing something about it is the first step to detecting cancer early."

✘ Television presenter, Jenni Falconer, said: "Being fit and healthy is important to me. Cancer is a scary thing for anyone to address but it is not a death sentence anymore. More people than ever in Scotland are surviving lung cancer compared to 25 years ago because more people are getting checked earlier. The early detection of lung cancer is key so please visit your doctor if you have any concerns about your chest, breathing or cough."

"I sadly never met my father-in-law who was a victim of lung cancer over 20 years ago-it was a painful and unbearable time for everyone. Don't let this happen to you and your family."

Lorraine McIntosh, singer with the hugely successful Scottish band Deacon Blue, knows how important it is to be aware of any changes to your lungs. She said: "Being a singer, I'm reliant on my lungs to do my job and I'm conscious of any changes or illnesses I feel coming on which affect my voice. We should all know the signs and symptoms of lung cancer and be ready to spot any concerns early, whether that's with yourself, a partner or a parent. I urge anyone who is worried about their lungs to go to their GP as soon as they can."

Singer-songwriter Eddi Reader said: "Get interested in the body that carries you, notice it and give it the respect it deserves. Check for cancer early and treat yourself to peace of mind. Lung cancer can be caught and treated. You are precious, give yourself the gift of care"