

TO MEDIA:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EXCELA HEALTH'S LUNG CANCER SCREENING, TREATMENT PROGRAM
BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR LONGTIME SMOKER**

GREENSBURG, Pa., November 2021 ... Judy Bowman always enjoyed that cigarette with her cup of coffee, even after her mother died of stage IV lung cancer in 2010. Granted, her mother lived to age 80, but the Jeannette woman knew that she might not be so fortunate. That's why she repeatedly requested a low-dose CT scan to check her lungs for telltale signs of disease. "The scans showed nothing, so I continued to smoke."

When Bowman returned for another low-dose CT scan earlier this year, the findings were now troubling, and she soon found herself in the office of Excela Health thoracic surgeon Michael Szwerc, MD, director of Excela Health's Center for Lung and Thoracic Disease. "He told me I had a 2-centimeter mass in one of my lobes. By the time of my robotic surgery, in late April, the tumor had grown. It was stage 1, but it was an aggressive cancer. Dr. Szwerc told me that, by coming in when I did for the low-dose CT scan, I pretty much saved my life."

The news of her diagnosis was enough to persuade Bowman to quit smoking cold turkey. Now she also hopes she can persuade other smokers to seek out a lung cancer screening, so that they, too, get a renewed lease on life.

“Even if you aren’t having any symptoms, talk with your primary care provider and push for that preventive health screening,” insisted Bowman. “This is no different than a mammogram or colonoscopy when it comes to detecting a life-threatening problem in time to actually affect the outcome.”

Bowman also urges people to be persistent regarding the need for the lung cancer screening because while cancer death rates keep falling across the United States, Westmoreland County exceeds the state and national incidence rate for lung cancer. “The good news was when Dr. Szwerc told my husband and me that he was able to remove every bit of the cancer. I didn’t need chemotherapy or radiation, and today I am cancer-free. I wish that same result for everybody.”

Excelsa Health’s Advanced Lung Center is rated a Screening Center of Excellence by the Lung Cancer Alliance, a health organization with a mission, in part, to guide the at-risk and patient community to their Screening Centers of Excellence and treatment center networks and share best practices, patient education tools and research opportunities with healthcare professionals.

Known as the “mammogram” of lung cancer testing, the low dose CT scan aids in finding cancer sooner. Generally, with early detection, more treatment options may be available.

To qualify for a low-dose CT scan, individuals should be between the ages of 50 and 80 and be a current or former smoker who has quit smoking within the last 15 years. The screening is covered by most insurances. Affordable out of pocket payment options are available for those without insurance, if insurance coverage is denied or if criteria is not met.

For more information, and to watch an interview with Judy Bowman visit www.excelsahealth.org and search lung.

To schedule an appointment, call 724-689-1440. The staff will schedule an appointment for those who meet the requirements.