

Imagery Alternatives Guide to help avoid lung cancer stigma



What is the Imagery Alternatives Guide?

The Imagery Alternatives Guide provides suggestions for new images to replace images that may contribute to lung cancer stigma. It continues the process begun in the Imagery Audit Tool but can also be used to inform choices when creating new materials.



This guide describes non-stigmatizing visuals to help you create person-centered, empathic, and effective materials about lung cancer, smoking, and tobacco.

How do I use this guide?



If you are revising an existing material that has been assessed with the Imagery Audit tool:

- 1 Check the Imagery Audit form to see which stigmatizing **color schemes, settings, interactions between people, facial expressions or body language, or lung cancer tropes** you identified in the material.
- 2 Check the tables below, which describe imagery to avoid and alternatives.



If you are creating a new material:

- 1 Consider using the imagery characteristics listed in the right column of the tables below, while avoiding those in the left column.
- 2 As you finalize your new material, consider double-checking it against the tables below for images that may contribute to stigma.

Imagery Alternatives

Material I am assessing: _____

Color scheme

Color is a powerful tool for communicating emotions and capturing attention before viewers even engage with any of the written content of a material.



⊗ Avoid these color schemes

Combinations of red and black, which can draw mental associations with smoking, even in lung cancer materials that are not related to smoking.

✔ Consider these color schemes instead

Bright colors like yellows, greens, and blues, which capture attention and can support positive emotions.

Setting or implied setting

The setting of images conveys the creator's personal ideas about those images and may sway the audience's opinions about lifestyle, financial and social status, etc.



⊗ Avoid these settings

Messy scenes or unhealthy settings, which suggest that's how creators view the lives of those they are portraying.

✔ Consider these settings instead

Medical or "healthy" and people-based settings (such as parks or social gatherings).

Interactions between people

Social exclusion and "othering," treating someone as if they are not part of a group, are key aspects of stigma commonly reported among lung cancer patients that can be visually represented in imagery.



⊗ Avoid these images

Images that show people feeling isolated and alone.

✔ Consider these images instead

Images showing groups of people mingling in a positive way can help tell a story of belonging and support.



Interactions between people (continued)

⊗ Avoid these images

Images where one person seems more powerful than another, such as one person standing while the other is sitting.

✔ Consider these images instead

Images where people are at the same level as one another and have similar facial expressions.

Facial expressions and body language

Much like setting and interactions, facial expressions allow viewers to make assumptions about the story and characters portrayed in imagery. It is important to consider what this story implies about the people it is representing.



⊗ Avoid these images

Negative or sad facial expressions can be used to convey seriousness and elicit sympathy, but they can also portray hopelessness, powerlessness, or weakness which are not feelings that should be promoted in the context of lung cancer and tobacco.

✔ Consider these images instead

Neutral, hopeful, or empowered expressions convey the seriousness of lung cancer without implying that people with lung cancer experience constant sadness.

Lung cancer tropes

Imagery that relies on lung cancer tropes to incite fear or disgust should not be used as their effectiveness is questionable, particularly among people affected by and at risk for lung cancer.



⊗ Avoid these images

Graphic imagery of the physiological and anatomical side effects of tobacco use.

Imagery of smoking or cigarettes, even if it seems mild.

✔ Consider these images instead

When discussing the health implications of tobacco use from a biological perspective, use animations or illustrations, as they are in most explanations of anatomy and medicine.

Other things that your target audience may have in common, like shared goals, history, or hobbies.