New study focuses on lung cancer

Some 3,000 Louisianians contract lung cancer each year. 2,800 die from it.

At this time, the standard medical treatment for lung cancer is surgical removal of the affected tissue. But a new study has begun which tests a different treatment -- giving the patient chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy after the cancer has been removed.

The North Central Cancer Treatment Group, comprised of clinics across the country, is sponsoring the study. These clinics will be collecting study data in a test of whether or not the proposed new treatment increases lung cancer patients' survival chances. Oschner Clinic of Baton Rouge and Oschner Clinic of New Orleans are the only medical institutions in Louisiana accepting patients into the study protocol. The Hattiesburg Clinic in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and cancer specialists in Biloxi and Gulfport, are also participating in the study.

Dr. B.J. Brooks, Ochsner Clinic of Baton Rouge oncologist, is the Medical Oncology Chairman for the new study. "We are attempting to determine whether or not giving lung cancer patients chemotherapy, radiation therapy or the combination of both is better than no further treatment, which is considered the standard treatment," Dr. Brooks says. "By having patients participate in the research study, we can combine information from all over the country to let the medical profession know whether or not the new treatments are better than what we see now.

Patients interested in participating in the study should call Ochsner Clinic of Baton Rouge at 295-4200 or Ochsner Clinic of New Orleans at (504) 838-3708.