(Main narrator speaking):

Throughout the 20th century the number of cancer cases has grown steadily and alarmingly, but one of the most baffling trends is the rise in lung cancer. Some experts theorize that pollution from industry or automobiles may have something to do with the increase, but there is no proof for this or any other theory. In 1948 two British researchers, Bradford Hill and Richard Doll, begin their own search for the cause of lung cancer.

(Sir Richard Doll, Professor of Medicine, University of Oxford speaking):

I personally thought when we started the study that it was probably something to do with motor cars. I felt they had most obviously increased enormously. Roads had been tarred, and we knew that fumes from tar could be carcinogenic, and if I had had to bet I would bet it was something to do with the tarring of roads or with motor cars.

(Main narrator speaking):

Hill and Doll survey hospital patients with and without lung cancer. They ask where they live and work; what kind of job they have; the foods they eat; how much they drive; and if they have ever smoked cigarettes.

(Sir Richard Doll speaking):

When we started looking at the results, it very rapidly became clear that there was a crucial difference between patients with lung cancer and other patients. And that was, not only did people with the disease smoke cigarettes more often, but they smoked more heavily, they had begun smoking earlier in life, they had less often given up smoking. And then, when we looked around the world, we found countries where cigarettes smoking had been common for some years, lung cancer was common.