

Lung cancer screening: yes or no?

Use this **Option Grid™** decision aid to help you and your healthcare professional decide whether or not to screen for lung cancer.

Frequently Asked Questions ↓	Screening using low dose computed tomography (CT)	No screening
Who is it offered to?	To high-risk smokers or ex-smokers, aged 55 to 80, who have smoked at least 1 pack a day for thirty years. It is not offered to those who have symptoms of lung cancer. Ex-smokers are offered screening if they have quit in the last 15 years.	Only those at high risk of lung cancer are offered low-dose CT for screening. People who are not at high risk of lung cancer are not offered screening because there is no proven benefit to them.
How is lung cancer found?	It is often found using low-dose CT: an x-ray offered once a year. It takes a few minutes and needs no special preparation.	Without screening, lung cancer is usually found after symptoms are present or when other tests are done. In these cases, lung cancer is more likely to be found at a later stage.
What are the benefits of screening?	Low-dose CT finds signs of possible lung cancer in roughly 1 in every 100 screened (1%), and at a time when treatment has a better chance of success. 65 in every 100 scans (65%) will not find any problems.	Does not apply
What are the harms or risks?	<p>False alarms: Roughly 25 in every 100 people (25%) have small nodules found in their lungs. To make sure these nodules are not cancer, more tests are done, for up to 2 years.</p> <p>Unnecessary treatment: Some suspicious nodules might be treated even though they might never cause problems.</p> <p>Finding more problems: Low-dose CT sometimes reveals findings in other parts of the body. These may lead to more tests and possible treatment.</p> <p>Radiation: Consider the possible benefit of finding lung cancer early against the small radiation risk of many CTs.</p>	<p>If you know that you are at risk for lung cancer and do not get a low-dose CT, you might worry that you have missed a chance to find the cancer early.</p> <p>If cancer is found because of symptoms like unexplained weight loss and coughing up blood, then the cancer is probably more advanced, and treatment will be more difficult.</p>
What are the possible results?	25 people in every 100 screened (25%) will be told they have nodules, but few of these will be cancer. More tests will probably be done. Roughly 10 in every 100 people screened (10%) will be told about other problems, such as infections or lung damage from smoking.	Does not apply

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