NHS



Lung Cancer Screening

What you need to know

For more information visit:
www.nhs.uk/conditions/lung-cancer-screening

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Additional support

www.mft.nhs.uk/lunghealthcheck / 0161 529 0900

Why we are offering lung cancer screening

There are often no signs or symptoms of lung cancer at an early stage. As a result, many people with lung cancer are being diagnosed at a later stage.

Most lung cancers grow slowly enough for them to be found at an early stage by a lung scan.

Lung Cancer Screening helps find problems early, usually before you notice anything is wrong, and at a stage when treatment could be simpler and more successful - ultimately saving more lives.

What is Lung Cancer Screening?

Lung Cancer Screening is a two-stage process.



1. You will have a phone call or meeting with a health professional to evaluate your chances of developing lung cancer.



2. If you are identified as someone who has a higher chance of developing lung cancer you'll be invited to have a quick scan. The scan will take a detailed image of your lungs for us to review. If anything that could be lung cancer is found you'll be referred on for tests or treatment.

Why you've been invited

People aged from 55 to 74 who smoke or used to smoke usually have a higher risk of developing lung cancer. The majority of people will not have lung cancer found, but if it is, we can act quickly and provide treatment. This booklet aims to help you choose whether or not to take part in Lung Cancer Screening.

Why early diagnosis makes a difference

If there is a problem on one part of the lung, and this is caught early, treatment can focus on just the bit that is affected. If found later the problem may have spread to other areas of the lungs and body making it more difficult to treat.

What happens at Lung Cancer Screening?

There are two parts to Lung Cancer Screening: the first part is the Lung Health Check and the second part is the lung scan. The results of your initial assessment will decide whether you need the lung scan. Throughout the process you will have plenty of time to chat to the health professionals and ask any questions.

For more information and support call 0161 529 0900

1. Lung Health Check

You will have a phone call or meeting with a health professional to discuss your breathing, overall lung health, lifestyle and family and medical history. A risk score will be calculated and this will decide next steps.

If you currently smoke and would like to quit, we can connect you with your local stop-smoking service for more support. We understand that quitting smoking is challenging and respect your choice.

There are three possible outcomes:

No problems found

The health professional may find nothing further to look into. You don't need to have a lung scan. You may be invited back at a future date to re-assess your risk.

Offer of a lung scan

If your Lung Health Check finds that you meet a certain level of risk, you will be offered a lung scan to check your lungs for signs of lung cancer.

Referral to your GP or local hospital

If problems are found but you do not require a scan, the health professional may refer you to your GP or another specialist.

In all three cases we will write to your GP to let them know.

2. Lung scan

You will be invited to have a quick scan of your lungs.

This is a special CT (Computed Tomography) scan that uses a very low dose of radiation and a computer to take a detailed picture of your lungs.

What happens during the lung scan?

You do not need to do anything to prepare for your scan.

1. During the scan, you will usually lie flat on your back on a bed that moves through the CT scanner. The scanner is shaped like a ring and it rotates around a small section of your body as you pass through it.
2. Specially-trained staff (called radiographers) control the scanner from behind a screen in the CT room. You will be able to see and speak to them during the scan.
3. When a scan is taken, you will need to lie still and follow simple breathing instructions for 10 seconds. This makes sure the pictures are not blurred.
4. The scan is painless and you will be able to eat, drink and drive as normal before and after your scan. No injections are needed for this scan. Most people will not need to get undressed as the CT scan can be performed fully clothed. However, please avoid wearing jewellery and clothes containing metal (such as zips), as these will need to be removed.

Lung scan - possible results

You will get your results from us within four weeks. There are four possible results:

No problems found

This means we saw no signs of lung cancer on the scan. We will write to you with the results and ask you to come back for another scan in two years. However, it is still possible that lung cancer could develop between scans or that the scan may have missed it. If you notice anything that is not normal for you or have any of the symptoms listed on page 9 before your next scan, tell your doctor.

Second scan needed

This usually means there is something on the scan but we cannot currently tell what is causing it. It is probably something harmless, but because it could be more serious we will ask you to come for another scan in around three or twelve months, just to check.

Further tests needed

This means we've seen something on the scan and you need further tests, which could include a biopsy. We will call you and write to the hospital so you can be seen quickly by a doctor to investigate further.

Another problem found

The scan is mainly designed to find lung cancer, but it can occasionally find other problems. These can vary from serious to less significant. We will write to you and your GP and ensure you are referred to the correct specialist for anything important we find that may require treatment.

What you need to know about lung scans

Treatment of early lung cancer is often successful

You are three times more likely to be diagnosed at an early stage through Lung Cancer Screening.

Small and early lung cancer can often be removed completely by operation or treated with radiotherapy.

Research suggests screening for lung cancer using CT scans can reduce your risk of dying from the cancer by around 25%.

The low dose CT scan will expose you to a small amount of radiation

It is the same as about one year's worth of radiation from the natural environment.

Radiation can cause cell damage which may, after many years or decades, become cancerous. If a further CT scan is needed then this will expose you to more radiation.

The overall risk of these CT scans causing a cancer remains very low, compared with the benefits of detecting lung cancer early.

For a very small number of people the scan does not always find a cancer that is there

This is called a false negative. You could also still develop lung cancer in the future. If you do start to display symptoms at any time please see your doctor.

In some people, the scan picks up something even though they do not have lung cancer

This is called a false positive result and would mean you need further tests before confirming you don't have cancer.

Scans can pick up lung cancers that will never cause a person harm

Doctors cannot always tell if a cancer will go on to be life threatening. As a result, some people will receive treatment that they may not need. This is unusual in lung cancer screening.

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What is lung cancer?

Lung cancer is one of the most common types of cancer.

It is when abnormal cells divide in an uncontrolled way to form a tumour in the lung.

There are usually no signs or symptoms in the early stages of lung cancer.

Finding cancer early means treatment is much more likely to be successful.

Most lung cancer grows slowly enough for it to be found at an early stage by a low-dose CT scan.

Finding lung cancer early can really improve a person's experience and outcome of treatment. This is why screening for lung cancer is offered.



What are the symptoms of lung cancer?

Lung cancer can start to develop between scans and scans can sometimes miss lung cancer. It is important to look out for anything that is unusual for you, especially:

- A persistent cough or change in your normal cough
- Coughing up blood
- Being short of breath
- Unexplained tiredness or weight loss
- An ache or pain when breathing or coughing
- Appetite loss

If you notice one or more of these symptoms, see your GP as soon as possible. Do not wait for another scan.

What can I do to reduce my risk of lung cancer?

Many people who have been smoking for years and who have tried to quit multiple times have successfully stopped smoking.

If you do smoke and would like to stop, there are friendly, free and local stop smoking services waiting for you to get in touch.

A healthcare professional at your Lung Cancer Screening appointment can put you in touch with these services, you can ask your GP, contact NHS Smokefree on 0300 123 1044 or visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree.

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For more information about lung cancer, lung health checks and advice on smoking visit:

NHS Lung Cancer Information
www.nhs.uk/conditions/lung-cancer

NHS Smokefree
www.nhs.uk/smokefree

Cancer Research UK
www.cruk.org/lunghealthchecks
www.cruk.org/about-cancer/lung-cancer
www.cruk.org/smoking

Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation
www.roycastle.org/information
www.roycastle.org/help-and-support

Asthma + Lung UK
www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/symptoms-tests-treatments/tests/lung-health-checks

Local info on stop smoking services/contact info etc.

www.makesmokinghistory.co.uk

NHS England gateway reference: 000959