

## Screening for Lung Cancer

Lung cancer causes more deaths in the United States than any other type of cancer. Lung cancer in late stages may not be curable. Early lung cancer often has no signs. Lung cancer screening for patients who are at high risk can find cancer at an early stage, when it is more likely to be cured.

A recent nationwide trial showed **low-dose spiral computed tomography (LDCT)** scans are better at finding early-stage lung cancer than chest x-rays. Screening with LDCT lowered the risk of dying from lung cancer.

### Who needs LDCT screening?

Lung cancer screening is not for everyone. Current guidelines recommend screening for people at high risk:

- 55-80 years old
- **and** smoked an average of one pack a day or more for 30 years
- **and** currently smoking or quit within the past 15 years
- **and** no signs of lung cancer or a history of any cancer in the past 5 years

Screening is also recommended for another group of people at high risk:

- More than 50 years old
- **and** smoked an average of one pack a day for 20 years
- **and** with one or more of these risk factors:
  - Exposure to radon
  - Workplace exposure to chemicals
  - Family history of lung cancer
  - History of lung diseases such as COPD or pulmonary fibrosis

Exposure to smoke from other smokers, or second-hand smoke, is not considered a high-risk factor at this time.

### What is LDCT?

LDCT uses special x-ray equipment to make pictures of the inside of the chest. These pictures can help doctors find many lung diseases, including cancer.

### What happens after the screening?

If your scan shows a growth in your lungs, a doctor at Huntsman Cancer Institute will schedule an appointment to talk about the results. If the scan shows no growth, you will get a letter with follow-up recommendations.

### Benefits of Screening

Screening can find lung cancer at an early stage when a patient has a better chance of surviving. Screening may also find diseases in the chest other than lung cancer that may need to be treated.

### Risks of screening

- LDCT scanning exposes you to radiation. The radiation dose from an LDCT scan equals about 10 chest x-rays.
- LDCT scans cannot tell the difference between cancer and other growths in the lungs. To tell if a growth is cancer, you may need more tests. This means you may be exposed to more radiation. You may need surgery to get lung samples for testing.
- LDCT scans may not find cancer growths that are there.
- Not all lung cancers are the same. Some slow-growing cancers may never result in death. Treating these cancers may not be necessary.
- LDCT will not find all cancers at an early stage. Cancer found by LDCT is not always curable.
- Finding a growth on the scan, even if it is not cancer, can cause you distress and affect your quality of life. Many growths found on scans are not cancer.

Please call 801-587-4470 to find out if an LDCT scan to screen for lung cancer may be right for you. Talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits of screening before getting the scan.

### For help quitting tobacco

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**1-800-QUIT-NOW**