



Deciding on obtaining a lung cancer screening should be a decision made between you and your health care provider. The most important thing you can do is to quit smoking if you are still smoking. Talk to your doctor about resources to help you quit.



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## Lung Cancer Screening



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## What is lung cancer screening?

Lung cancer screening looks for signs of the disease before there are any symptoms. Currently, it is recommended only for patients who are at high risk. The CT scan can identify small nodules or other abnormalities in your lungs. A CT scan is the only proven effective way to screen for lung cancer. It is important to note that adherence to annual screening will be imperative.

Who should consider being screened for lung cancer?

1. Current smokers with at least a 30-pack per year history of smoking.
2. Former smokers who have quit within the past 15 years and have a history of smoking at least 30 packs per year.
3. Between the ages of 55-77.
4. Absence of signs or symptoms of lung cancer.
5. Absence of any other disease that would prevent a person from receiving cancer treatments such as surgery.

## Are there radiation risks from the CT scan?

Lung cancer screening is done with a low dose CT scan which is 25% of the dose of a regular CT scan. However, exposure to repeated or high doses of radiation may cause cancer. The benefits of screening are probably much greater than the harm from radiation.

## Benefits of lung cancer screening:

- The most obvious benefit of lung cancer screening is finding lung cancers at an early stage where in most cases it can be surgically removed.
- If a lung cancer is found in a later stage, treatment can begin earlier which can improve the chances of successful treatment.
- If a questionable lung nodule is found, it can be monitored closely and if it grows it can be removed at an early stage.
- It is important to note that lung screening is not a one-time test. It must be repeated each year while you are still within the guidelines.

## Possible harms of lung cancer screening:

- There is a chance that a nodule may look like a cancer but is not.
- An invasive procedure, such as biopsy, may be done to determine if the nodule is a cancer or a benign finding.
- In addition, a false positive finding may cause a great deal of stress until which time the nodule is proven to be benign.

