Get Screened: Detect Lung Cancer as Early as Possible

IF SMOKING IS IN YOUR PAST OR PRESENT

ASK IF LUNG CANCER SCREENING SHOULD BE IN YOUR FUTURE.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death. About 2,400 people die from lung cancer each year in NYC.

Detect lung cancer as early as possible.

It is hard to detect lung cancer early without a screening test. This is because symptoms usually do not show until the cancer has reached later stages, when it is more difficult to treat. A screening test can detect lung cancer before you have symptoms. Detecting lung cancer early may save your life.

Screening is the key to detecting lung cancer early.

The lung cancer screening test recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force is called low-dose computed tomography (LDCT). A yearly LDCT test is recommended for people who:

- Are between ages 50 and 80

- Have at least a 20 "pack year" history of smoking (see "What are pack years?")

- Smoke or have quit in the last 15 years

LDCT is a relatively new screening test, so you may not have heard about it before. Ask your health care provider about your lung cancer risk and if you should get a screening.

Talk to your provider about the benefits and risks of lung cancer screening.

The benefit of screening is being able to detect lung cancer early, which may save your life! The risks of screening include:

- Exposure to low amounts of radiation (a little more than a mammogram)

- Getting a false positive (results showing you may have lung cancer when you actually do not)

- Detecting cancers that will not harm you or might go away on their own, but which may lead to an unnecessary treatment or test

When considering screening, ask your provider questions and discuss your lung cancer risk. Screening takes less than one minute. Afterward, your provider should contact you with the results. Make sure you understand your results and what you should do next. Do not be afraid to ask questions if you are unsure.

What are pack years?

Pack years measure how much a person has smoked over a long period of time.

You can figure out your pack years by multiplying the number of cigarette packs you smoked a day by the number of years you smoked. For example, if you smoked one pack a day for 20 years, your pack years would be 20. You can also ask your provider to help you figure out your pack years.

Is LDCT better at detecting early stage lung cancer than chest X-rays?

Yes. Studies show screening with LDCT can lower the risk of dying from lung cancer, while screening with a chest X-ray does not.

What are some other risks for lung cancer?

Know your risk factors and address them where you can:

- Secondhand smoke
- Radon, a gas found in some houses and buildings
- Arsenic, asbestos, chromium, diesel exhaust and silica
- Radiation therapy to your chest
- Personal or family history of lung cancer

How can I lower my risk for lung cancer?

Not smoking is the best way to prevent lung cancer. If you smoke, make a plan to quit.

- Talk to your provider about medication and counseling options. Most health insurance plans, including Medicaid, cover services to help you quit.

- Visit **nysmokefree.com** or call 866-NY-QUITS (866-697-8487) to apply for a free starter kit of nicotine medications or talk to a quit coach.

- Visit **asiansmokersquitline.org**, or call 800-838-8917 (if you speak Cantonese or Mandarin), 800-556-5564 (if you speak Korean) or 800-778-8440 (if you speak Vietnamese) to apply for nicotine patches or talk to a trained counselor.

- Visit **nyc.gov/health** and search for **NYC Quits** to find resources to help you quit.

- Visit **nyc.gov/health/map** to find programs to help you quit.

Will my health insurance cover my yearly lung cancer screening?

In New York State, Medicaid, Medicare and most other health insurance plans will cover your yearly lung cancer screening if you qualify for one. Qualifications, such as your age and pack years, may vary by plan, so check your coverage with your health insurance provider before getting screened. Visit **nyc.gov/getcoverednyc** or call **311** to find out how to get health insurance if you do not have it.

Where can I get a lung cancer screening?

Many sites in NYC offer lung cancer screening. Ask your provider to refer you to a screening site. You can call the site to get information about health insurance coverage, referral requirements and how to schedule an appointment.

Visit **nyc.gov/health** and search for **lung cancer** to learn more.

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