



# Benefits of lung cancer screening

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
**MDAnderson**  
~~Cancer Center~~  
Making Cancer History®



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CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH  
INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

**Lung cancer screening can find lung cancer early when it's easier to treat.** If lung cancer is caught early, patients are less likely to die from it.

The only recommended lung cancer screening exam is low-dose computed tomography or a low-dose CT scan. This is a type of X-ray that works by capturing pictures of your lungs.

## What happens during a lung cancer screening exam?

**Lung cancer screening is a non-invasive test** where you lie down on a table, and then the table slides in and out of the scanning machine. The CT images create a detailed picture of your lungs. They are then examined by a doctor specialized in lung cancer diagnosis.

## Who is eligible for lung cancer screening?

MD Anderson recommends lung cancer screening every year for people who:

- Currently smoke or quit within the past 15 years
- Are between the ages of 50 to 80 years old
- Have a smoking history of 20 cigarettes a day for 20 years or the equivalent of that (this is called *20 pack years*)

**Scan the QR code to use our lung screening calculator and find out if you are eligible.**



If you are eligible for lung cancer screening, talk to your doctor to see if this exam is right for you.

## What are the benefits of lung cancer screening?

**Lung cancer screening is important for the early detection of lung cancer.**

Early detection means that there is a higher likelihood that the cancer can be cured. Screening finds 8 out of 10 lung cancers at an early stage. Without lung cancer screening, most lung cancers are found at a later stage.

**Certain groups of people are less likely to be diagnosed early**, such as people who are Black, Latino, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and Indigenous Americans. Screening can be a powerful tool to change this and make sure everyone has the best chance of recovering from lung cancer.

## Are there any risks to lung cancer screening?

**Low-dose CT scans do expose you to a small amount of radiation.** The amount of radiation is the same as what you receive from simply living on Earth for six months.

**Screening can lead to false positive results.** A false-positive means that the screening exam found something in your lungs that is not really there, or it found something that is not harmful. False positives may lead to unnecessary additional tests, such as a biopsy.

## Quit smoking today.

**Smoking cigarettes is the number one risk factor for lung cancer — 90% of lung cancer deaths are caused by smoking.**

Smoking increases your risk of getting lung cancer by 15–30 times. Even breathing in someone else's smoke secondhand causes lung cancer.

The best way to quit is by using medication and counseling.

- Call 1-800-784-8669 or text QUIT to 47848.
- Talk to your doctor about treatment options.
- Visit [SmokeFree.gov](https://SmokeFree.gov) for more information.

## Want to know more about lung cancer screening?

- Talk to your doctor to discuss lung cancer screening — find a doctor conversation guide here: <https://tinyurl.com/ALALDCTDCG>.
- Learn more about what to expect from lung cancer screening here: <https://tinyurl.com/LDCTEXPECT>.
- Find out if your insurance covers a lung cancer screening exam here: <https://tinyurl.com/LDCTCOVERAGE>.
- Find the closest place to get lung cancer screening here: <https://tinyurl.com/LDCTLOCATOR>.

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