



# Should you get screened for lung cancer? Talk with your doctor to decide

In this booklet, you'll learn about:



Who should get lung cancer screening



How you and your doctor can decide if you should get lung cancer screening



Questions to ask your doctor



## Who should get lung cancer screening?

To screen for lung cancer, doctors use low-dose computed tomography (LDCT). The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends screening with LDCT for people who:

- Have a higher risk of getting lung cancer based on smoking exposure, and
- Do not currently have any symptoms

The USPSTF updates the screening criteria based on new research. The checklist below has the latest criteria.

### ✓ Use this checklist to see if you should get a screening

Talk with your doctor about getting lung cancer screening if you meet all of these USPSTF criteria:

- Are between 50 to 80 years old
- Have a 20 pack-year smoking history
- Currently smoke or quit within the past 15 years

The USPSTF recommends yearly screening for people who meet the checklist criteria. They recommend to stop lung cancer screening when a person:

- Turns 81 years old
- Has not smoked for 15 years
- Gets a health problem that would limit their lifespan or ability to be treated for cancer

### How do I know my pack-years?

Multiply:

$$\text{Number of years you've smoked} \times \text{The number of cigarette packs you smoked per day (1 pack = 20 cigarettes)}$$



For example:

- 1 pack a day for 20 years = 20 pack-years
- 2 packs a day for 10 years = 20 pack-years
- Half (0.5) a pack a day for 40 years = 20 pack-years



For an online quiz to see if you meet the criteria, visit [www.lungevity.org/canigetsscreened](http://www.lungevity.org/canigetsscreened)



## How can my doctor and I decide if I should get lung cancer screening?

If you meet the criteria on page 1 – or even if you don't – schedule a visit to talk with your doctor about lung cancer screening.

You should decide together with your doctor if you will get a lung cancer screening. Your doctor could be either your primary care doctor or a pulmonologist (doctor who specializes in lung health). This is called a **shared decision-making visit**.

In a shared decision-making visit about lung cancer screening, you and your doctor can talk about:

- Your health history
- If you fit the USPSTF criteria, using the checklist on page 1 and the online quiz
- Risk factors that may give you a higher chance of getting lung cancer, such as smoking or a family history of lung cancer

During this shared decision-making visit, your doctor will:

- Ask you for information about things such as if you have smoked cigarettes in the past or still do
- Discuss the benefits (possible helps) and risks (possible problems) of LDCT screening
- Talk about getting help to stop using tobacco (tobacco cessation counseling) if you still smoke and want to quit

### Next steps if you and your doctor decide you will get a lung cancer screening

Your doctor can help you choose a screening center. Your doctor can also fill out any paperwork your insurance may require, such as an order or preauthorization.



# Questions to ask your doctor about LDCT lung cancer screening

These questions can help you talk with your doctor about lung cancer screening. Write down the question numbers and their answers on the next page.

- 1 If have no signs of lung cancer, why should I get screened now for lung cancer?
- 2 Do I meet the criteria to get screened?
- 3 Will my insurance cover the cost of the screening?
- 4 Where can I go to get screened?
- 5 How do I prepare for a screening?
- 6 Is screening completely safe?  
Does it hurt?

Write the question numbers and their answers here

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Visit [LUNGevity.org](https://LUNGevity.org) to learn more about lung cancer screening and find other booklets in this series

**Booklet 1** Learn about lung cancer and your risk of getting it

**Booklet 2** Lung cancer screening can find cancer early and save your life

**Booklet 4** Lung cancer screening and health insurance: Know what insurance will cover

**Booklet 5** Prepare for your lung cancer screening: What to expect during a low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) scan

**Booklet 6** After your lung cancer screening: Understand your low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) scan results and next steps



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