



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

In this booklet, you'll learn about:



Lung nodules that an LDCT may show



Possible results of an LDCT scan



Next steps after your LDCT scan



What will the doctor look for in my LDCT scan images?

The radiologist (imaging doctor) who reviews your LDCT scan images will look for anything abnormal in and around your lungs. These abnormalities in the lungs are called **lung nodules**.

What are lung nodules?





Lung nodules are growths of tissue in your lungs. On the LDCT images, they look like round or oval-shaped white areas. Lung nodules are very common, and most are **not** cancer.

Lung nodules can be caused by:

- Past or current infections from bacteria, like tuberculosis, and fungus
- Other health problems, such as rheumatoid arthritis or sarcoidosis

Tips to relax while waiting for your scan results

It's normal to feel nervous or anxious while waiting for your scan results. If you are feeling anxious, talk with your doctor. Here are other tips to help you cope:

-  Focus on the present, instead of thinking about the future
-  Spend time with family and friends who ease your stress
-  Distract yourself – watch movies, listen to music, or read
-  Use relaxation methods, such as deep breathing or being active



What are the possible results of my LDCT scan?

Your doctor will discuss your results with you.

- ⊖ **Negative**, which means the doctor **did not find any lung nodules**. You should have another LDCT scan in 1 year.
- ⊕ **Positive**, which means the doctor **found 1 or more lung nodules**

An LDCT can also find other abnormal growths in chest tissues outside the lungs.



If my scan shows one or more lung nodules, what are the next steps?

Your doctor will discuss your next steps based on whether the nodules are more or less likely to be cancer. This is based on:

Size of the lung nodules



Nodules are measured in millimeters (mm). Nodules that are 5mm or smaller (the size of a pea or smaller) are least likely to be cancer. The larger the nodule, the sooner you will need to take next steps.

How solid (dense) the nodules are

This is based on how well the X-rays from the LDCT pass through the nodule. The nodule will be one of these:



Nonsolid: Least likely to be cancer and most often found; look fuzzy on the LDCT images



Solid: More likely to be cancer and grow faster; most dense



Part-solid: Most likely to be cancer and grow fastest; look like a mix of fuzzy, solid, and nonsolid areas on the LDCT images

Shape of the lung nodules

The edges of the nodules may be:



Smooth: Least likely to be cancer; look round on the LDCT images



Uneven: More likely to be cancer; look like they have mounds or spikes

Where the lung nodules are (location)





Nodules in the upper parts of the lungs are more likely to be cancer.

If your doctor thinks a lung nodule could be cancer, they may suggest one or more of these next steps

- Another LDCT scan sooner than 1 year – your doctor will compare follow-up LDCT scan images to your first scan (baseline screening) to look for any changes in the size of the nodules
- Other imaging tests, such as PET/CT scan or chest CT scan, to get another view of a nodule
- Biopsy: Doctors will remove tissue from the lung nodule and look at it under a microscope to see if it is cancer
- Surgery to remove the nodule

The table below shows possible results and next steps:

	Negative result 	Positive result 
What it means	No lung nodules or abnormalities found	1 or more lung nodules or abnormalities found
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Have another LDCT scan in 1 year<input type="checkbox"/> Your doctor will decide how long you need to have yearly LDCT scans	<p>Your doctor may suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> You have other tests or scans to get a clear view of the nodules<input type="checkbox"/> Another LDCT scan sooner than 1 year

Most lung nodules are **not** cancer.

Questions to ask your doctor

These questions may help you talk with your doctor and insurance company about your results. It may be helpful to write down other questions you have.

Write the question numbers and their answers on the next page.

Questions to ask your doctor

- 1 How long will it take to get my results?
- 2 How will I get my results and who will explain them to me?
- 3 What are my results? What do they mean?
- 4 What is the next step if my scan is negative (no nodules found)?
- 5 What is the next step if my scan is positive (lung nodules found)?
 - How likely is it that my lung nodule is cancer?
 - If it is cancer, what are my treatment options?

Questions to ask your insurance company

- 6 Will my insurance cover follow-up tests?
- 7 If my doctor recommends that I get a LDCT scan every year, will insurance cover it?

Write the question numbers and their answers here

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

Booklet 3 Should you get screening for lung cancer? Talk with your doctor to decide

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



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