



## How CT Scans Can Improve Lung Cancer Outcomes

Living a life that promotes whole health can bring an enormous amount of health benefits, including reducing your lung cancer risk. However, using tobacco products, including cigarettes, can have the opposite effect.

We know that smoking:

- Takes the lives of more than 480,000 Americans a year
- Causes almost 90 percent of all lung cancers
- Causes about 80 percent of all chronic obstructive lung disease deaths
- Leads to one-third of deaths from cardiovascular disease

For those who do smoke, know that it's even more important to be proactive about your lung health. In fact, you may want to talk to your doctor about whether or not a CT scan for lung cancer could increase your chances of [diagnosing lung cancer early](#), when successful treatment may be more likely.

### Updated Recommendations for Lung Cancer CT Scans

According to the results of a study of CT scan screening for lung cancer that was funded by the National Cancer Institute, low-dose CT scans reduced lung cancer deaths among smokers by 15 to 20%. The scans also reduced death from any cause during the study period by nearly 7%.

Because of these compelling findings, the American Lung Association and the United States Preventive Services Task Force now recommend low-dose CT scans for people at high risk of lung cancer.

### Candidates for Lung Cancer CT Scans

Current recommendations for low-dose CT scans include only people who are at the highest risk for lung cancer. This includes people who meet all of the following criteria:

- Are a current smoker or have quit within the last 15 years
- Are 55 to 80 years old
- Have a smoking history of 30 pack-years or more (for example, one pack a day for 30 years, two packs a day for 15 years, or the equivalent)

### Understanding Chest CT Scans

Chest CT (computed tomography) scans are a type of X-ray that shows the lungs in great detail. They allow doctors to assess the health of the lungs with greater accuracy than is possible with a standard chest X-ray.

Painless and noninvasive, CT scans pose few risks to adults. The amount of radiation used in the average scan is more than a standard X-ray, but the risks of radiation from the scan are still minimal. There may be a small risk for an allergic reaction to the contrast dye that is used during the scan, but this is rare.

For a chest CT scan or any imaging scan, it's always a good idea to be informed about [how to make your imaging appointment as successful and comfortable as possible](#).

### Protecting Your Lung Health

The main message is this: it's never too late to focus on your whole health. You can take action today to change your future health for the better by talking to your doctor about whether or not a CT scan is right for you.

If you think you might be at risk for lung cancer, come to our experts for guidance and support. With [leading-edge imaging technology](#), lung cancer specialists and mission to heal body, mind and spirit, we'll meet you wherever you are in your health journey.

To learn more about your trusted lung cancer care, visit [LungHealthProgram.com](http://LungHealthProgram.com)