

# What you need to know about your lung health check



**If lung cancer or another problem is found early, treatment will be simpler and more successful.**

## **Why are we offering lung health checks?**

Lung health checks are aimed at detecting lung cancer at an early stage and are run by specially trained nurses.

**It is important to attend your lung health check, even if you feel fit and healthy. Think of this as an MOT for your lungs.**

If lung cancer or another problem is found early, treatment will be simpler and more successful.

## **What is lung cancer?**

Lung cancer is one of the most common types of cancer.

Lung cancer is when abnormal cells divide in an uncontrolled way to form a tumour in the lung.

There are usually **no signs or symptoms** in the early stages of lung cancer.

Finding cancer early means it is much more likely to be cured.

Most lung cancer grows slowly enough for it to be found at an early stage by a low-dose CT (Computed Tomography) scan.

**We are providing lung health checks to help find lung cancer earlier.**

## Who do we invite?

Lung health checks are being offered in your area to people aged from 55 to 74 who smoke or have ever smoked.

NHS lung health checks are different to free NHS health checks via your GP.

Even if you have recently been for a free NHS health check, you should still attend your lung health check.



Targeted Lung  
Health Check  
Programme

**NHS**

**“If you get an invitation to go for a lung health check, please go.**

**You’ve got nothing to lose and everything to gain.**

**I’m living proof that, with early detection, you can go on to live a full and, “happy life after.**

**Terri Kay,**  
lung health check attendee

**A simple check-up for people aged 55-74 to find out how well your lungs are working.**

**[www.nottslunghealthcheck.nhs.uk](http://www.nottslunghealthcheck.nhs.uk)**

## How do we contact you to invite you for your lung health check?

You will receive a letter through the post inviting you for a telephone assessment. A patient call advisor will ring you within two weeks of receiving the letter. You may also receive a text message inviting you to ring us, if you wish to call at your own convenience.

## What happens during the telephone assessment?

This call will take about 10 – 15 minutes and the purpose is to assess your lung health by asking you questions based on your general health and smoking history. This will determine whether you are eligible for any further assessment.

If you do, a face to face appointment will be arranged with a nurse. This appointment will be within your local area.

They will ask you if you are happy for us to use your anonymous data for training and research purposes.

## What happens at a face to face lung health check?

You will meet a nurse at your appointment which will take approximately 30 minutes.

1

The nurse will ask you some questions about your lifestyle, family, smoking and medical history.

2

The nurse will talk to you about having a CT scan. This checks for early signs of lung cancer, this is also known as lung cancer screening.

3

You will then have your CT scan, if needed.

You will have plenty of time to chat to the nurse and ask any questions.

You can bring a friend, family member or partner with you on the day if you wish.

## What is lung cancer screening?

Lung cancer screening uses a low-dose CT scan to check for the early signs of lung cancer, before you have any symptoms. This is a special scan that uses a very low dose of radiation and a computer to take a detailed picture of your lungs.

## What happens during lung cancer screening?

1

During the CT scan, you will usually lie flat on your back on a bed that moves slowly into the CT scanner. The scanner is shaped like a ring (donut shape) and it rotates around a small section of your body as you pass through it.

2 Specially trained staff (called Radiographers) control the scanner from behind a screen in the CT room. You will be able to see and speak to them during the scan.

3 When a scan is taken, you will need to lie still and follow simple breathing instructions for 10 seconds. This makes sure the pictures are not blurred.

4 The scan is painless, and you will be able to eat, drink or drive as normal before and after your scan.



## Lung health check results

You will receive your results within four weeks of your CT scan. There are four possible results:

### **No abnormalities found**

This means that no signs of lung cancer or other abnormalities were seen on the scan. We will write to you and your GP with the results and ask you to come back for another scan in two years. However, it is still possible that lung cancer could develop or that the scan may have missed it. If you notice anything that is not normal for you before your next scan, tell your doctor.

### **A further scan maybe needed**

This usually means there are some nodules on the scan. It is probably something harmless but it could be more serious. We will write to you and your GP and ask you to come for another scan in around three months, just to check.

### **Abnormal result**

This means there is something abnormal on the scan and you need further tests. We will either call you or write to you with your results and arrange for you to have further tests. Your GP will also be advised of your results.

### **Incidental finding**

This means there is no sign of lung cancer but there are signs of other problems on the scan that may need treatment or medical advice. We will either call you or write to you and your GP with your results.



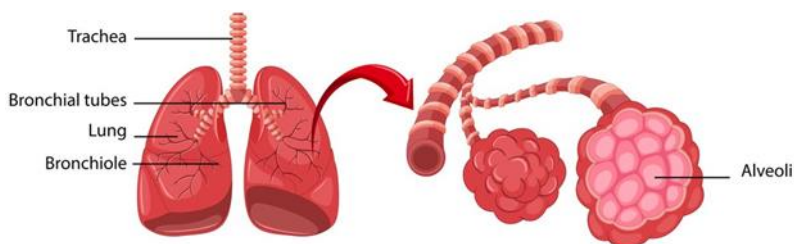
If you have any questions regarding your scan results you can call **0115 896 3600** where a nurse can offer advice.

## What are the benefits of lung health checks?

People are nearly three times more likely to be diagnosed with early stage lung cancer through lung health checks. Lung cancer found early can be cured.

- ◆ When found early, treatment may be simpler and more successful. Small and early lung cancer can often be removed completely by surgery or treated with radiotherapy (using radiation to kill cancer cells) if found in time.
- ◆ Research suggests lung cancer screening reduces your risk of dying from lung cancer by around 25% after each scan.

## Why early diagnosis makes a difference



You have two lungs made of five sections called lobes.

Each lung is made up of thousands of grape-like sacs, called alveoli.

**If there is a problem on one bit of the lung, early treatment can focus just on the bit that is affected.**

## What are the possible harms of lung health checks?

The low dose CT scan will expose you to a small amount of radiation. It is the same amount as about one year's worth of radiation from the natural environment.

Screening does not always find a cancer that is there and some people with lung cancer may be missed. This is very uncommon in lung health checks. If you are invited for a repeat scan in the future these are needed to ensure there has been no new changes since the previous one. Some individuals may develop changes in their lungs over time even if the previous scan was normal and this can be picked up from having a repeat scan in 24 months' time from your first scan.

## Helping you make a decision

It is your decision whether to attend your lung health check or not.

What happens to 250 people who have lung cancer screening?



Research shows that for 250 people who have two low dose CT scans as they go through lung cancer screening:



188 people will have no abnormalities at either scan.



42 people will have an extra CT scan based on the results of the first one.



20 people will go to hospital for further tests.

What will happen to the 20 people that go to the hospital for further tests?



3 will have further scans but no tests. They will not have lung cancer.



7 will have further tests such as a biopsy. They will not have lung cancer.

Less than 1 in 500 people will have an operation for suspected cancer but later be told that there was no cancer found.



10 will have further tests such as a biopsy. They will have lung cancer. These people will be offered treatment - most often an operation - that can cure the cancer.

At least 1 more person for every 250 people screened will survive lung cancer if they had not been screened.

## What are the symptoms of lung cancer?

Lung cancer can start to develop between scans and screening can sometimes miss lung cancer. It is important to look out for anything that is unusual for you, especially:

- ◆ A persistent cough or change in your normal cough
- ◆ Coughing up blood
- ◆ Being short of breath
- ◆ Unexplained tiredness or weight loss
- ◆ An ache or pain when breathing or coughing
- ◆ Appetite loss

If you notice any of these changes, see your GP as soon as possible. Do not wait for another scan.

## What can I do to reduce my risk of lung cancer?

The single best thing you can do to prevent lung cancer is not to smoke.

If you do smoke and would like to stop, there is free, local and expert support available. The nurse at your lung health check can put you in touch with these services. You are three times more likely to quit smoking with help from a Stop Smoking Service. Ask your GP practice about free and local support available.

Contact details for Stop Smoking services for Nottinghamshire residents:

Your Health Your Way:

0115 7722515

<https://yourhealthnotts.co.uk>

Contact details for Stop Smoking services for Nottingham City residents:

Thriving Nottingham:

0115 6485724

[https:// thrivingnottingham.org.uk](https://thrivingnottingham.org.uk)

### **Want to know more?**

For more information about lung cancer, lung health checks and advice on smoking visit:

NHS Lung Cancer Information

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/lung-cancer/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lung-cancer/)

NHS Smokefree

[www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree)

Cancer Research UK

[www.cruk.org/lunghealthchecks](http://www.cruk.org/lunghealthchecks)

[www.cruk.org/about-cancer/lung-cancer](http://www.cruk.org/about-cancer/lung-cancer)

[www.cruk.org/smoking](http://www.cruk.org/smoking)

Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation

[www.roycastle.org/information](http://www.roycastle.org/information) [www.roycastle.org/help-and-support](http://www.roycastle.org/help-and-support)

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Lung Health Checks:

[www.nottslunghealthcheck.nhs.uk](http://www.nottslunghealthcheck.nhs.uk)

To request this information in another language or format please contact the Engagement Team at: [nnicb-nn.engagement@nhs.net](mailto:nnicb-nn.engagement@nhs.net) or call or text 07385360071.

A privacy notice about this project can be found on the NHS England website <https://www.england.nhs.uk/homepage/>