

About your Lung Health Check



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Clarity approved by
Plain English Campaign



What are lung health checks?

Lung health checks aim to find and treat lung cancer early, before you have any signs or symptoms.



Your invitation will have arrived in the post with this booklet.



You will be asked some questions during a telephone appointment.



Depending on your answers, you may be offered a quick and painless lung cancer screening scan.



We will contact you and your doctor with the results.



Lung health checks save lives.

Research shows that lung cancer screening scans can reduce the chances of dying from lung cancer by 25%.



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Who is being invited?

Free lung health checks are being offered to people aged 60 to 74 from selected doctors' surgeries in the Rhondda area who smoke or have smoked in the past.

It is your choice whether to have a lung health check or not. This booklet will help you decide.

Lung health checks are different to other NHS health checks. Even if you have recently been for a health check, you should still consider having your lung health check.

What is lung cancer?

The lungs are a pair of organs inside the chest which help get oxygen in and waste gases out of your body. Lung cancer happens when cells in the lungs start growing out of control.

Lung cancer is one of the most common types of cancer. It does not usually cause any symptoms when it is at an early stage.

Lung health checks can help find lung cancer early, before you have any signs or symptoms. Finding cancer early gives you the best chance of successful treatment.



The telephone appointment

Your invitation letter with the date and time of your telephone appointment will have arrived with this booklet.

If you can't manage a telephone appointment, or if the appointment time is not convenient for you, get in touch using the contact details on the letter so we can discuss other options.

During the appointment we will ask you questions about your breathing, lifestyle and medical history.

We will use your answers to work out your chances of having lung cancer now or in the future. You may then be offered a lung cancer screening scan.

For every 3 people who complete the telephone appointment, based on their answers:

1 person is offered
a lung cancer screening
scan

2 people need
nothing further



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The lung cancer screening scan

The lung cancer screening scan is a special type of computerised tomography (CT) scan that uses x-rays and a computer to take a detailed picture of your lungs.

During the scan you usually lie flat on your back on a bed. The scanner is shaped like a ring and moves around a small section of your body as you pass through it.



CT scans take detailed pictures of your lungs to look for any early signs of lung cancer.

Picture © 2023 InHealth Limited

Trained staff control the scanner from behind a screen in the room. You will be able to see and speak to them. During the scan you will need to lie still and follow simple breathing instructions for 10 seconds. This makes sure the pictures are not blurred.

The scan is not painful. You can eat, drink or drive before and after your scan.



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The results

You will usually get your results within four weeks of the scan. There are three possible results.

1

No signs of lung cancer

Most people will have no signs of lung cancer on their scan. We will write to you and your doctor to give you the results.

2

Repeat scan needed

It is common to find small changes, called nodules, in the lungs on CT scans. They are usually harmless, but in a small number of people they can grow over time and turn into a lung cancer. If we see a nodule on your scan we will write to you and your doctor to give you the results. You will be invited for a repeat CT scan, usually after three months, to keep a check on things.

3

More tests needed

This means we have seen something on your scan and you need further tests. We will call you and refer you to an outpatient clinic at Royal Glamorgan Hospital. About half of the people who need more tests will go on to be diagnosed with lung cancer.

Are those the only possibilities?

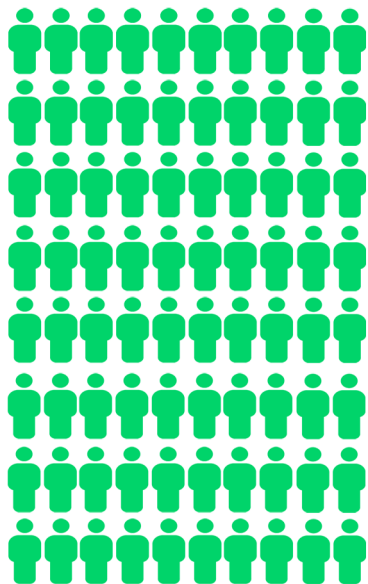
Sometimes lung cancer screening scans can pick up other things by chance, in the lungs or in other parts of the body. We will let you and your doctor know if you need any tests or treatments.



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For every 100 people who have a lung cancer screening scan



80 people have no signs of lung cancer



16 people will need a repeat CT scan after 3 months to check on a lung nodule



4 people will need more tests



of those people



2 people will be diagnosed with lung cancer



2 people will not have lung cancer



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What are the benefits of having a lung health check?

Lung health checks save lives.

Lung cancers found through lung health checks are much more likely to be at an early stage.

When lung cancer is found early, treatment may be simpler and is more likely to be successful.

Research shows that lung cancer screening scans can reduce your risk of dying from lung cancer by around 25%.



It is your choice whether to have your lung health check.

If you want more detailed information on the benefits and risks of lung health checks, you can find this online at:

<https://ctmuhb.nhs.wales/services/lung-health-check-pilot>



What are the risks of having a lung health check?

Like x-rays, CT scans use radiation to produce pictures of your lungs.

The dose of radiation from a lung cancer screening scan is much less than from most other types of CT scan. The chance of the scan saving your life by detecting an early lung cancer is far greater than the chance of the scan causing you harm.

Lung health checks and lung cancer screening scans do not find all lung cancers.

Some people who are not offered a scan will develop lung cancer. Sometimes lung cancers cannot be seen on scans, and very occasionally a cancer may be missed on a scan. Lung cancers can also develop after a screening scan.

Some people who need further tests after their scan will be found not to have lung cancer.

This can be worrying and cause distress.

Screening scans can sometimes pick up a lung cancer that would never cause harm.

Doctors cannot always tell if a cancer will go on to be life-threatening. This means some people will have tests and treatment that they would not have otherwise needed.





Gwyn, 62

Gwyn was offered a lung cancer screening scan following his telephone appointment.

Gwyn's scan showed no signs of lung cancer.

He got a letter in the post explaining his results within a few weeks of the scan.



Janice, 68

Janice was offered a lung cancer screening scan following her telephone appointment.

Her scan showed that she needed more tests. She had a phone call to explain the next steps.

Janice had a more detailed scan and a biopsy (where a sample of lung tissue is taken and examined under a microscope) at the hospital. This showed she had lung cancer. It was at an early stage.

She had keyhole surgery (using small cuts and a camera) to remove the cancer, and now has regular check-ups at the hospital.



Anita, 73

Anita's answers at her telephone appointment meant she did not need a lung cancer screening scan at this time.

She was told what to look out for in future.

Anita wanted help to stop smoking, to reduce her risk of developing lung cancer. She was put in touch with the free NHS Help Me Quit service.

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

Stopping smoking is the single most important change you can make to improve your health.

It is never too late to stop.

If you are ready to make a change, we are here to help. You are much more likely to stop for good with support from the free NHS Help Me Quit service in Wales. We can put you in touch during your telephone appointment, or you can refer yourself to the service by phone or online.

HELPA FFI
STOPIO
HELP ME
QUIT

Freephone 0800 085 2219

www.helpmequit.wales



What else can I do?



Keep active. No matter how much you do, physical activity is good for your body and mind. Aim to be active every day.

Eat a healthy, balanced diet. Eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day, and cut down on saturated fat and sugar.

Drink less than 14 units of alcohol a week, and spread any drinking out over three days or more.



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What should I look out for?

Lung cancer can develop at any time. It is important to look out for anything that is unusual for you, such as:

- a new cough that lasts more than three weeks, or a change in your usual cough
- coughing up blood
- unexplained tiredness or weight loss
- an ache or pain when breathing or coughing, or
- loss of appetite.

If you notice any of these changes, see your doctor as soon as possible. You can take this booklet with you.

For more information

For more information about lung health checks, go to:

<https://ctmuhb.nhs.wales/services/lung-health-checks/>



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