Care Gram

Lung Cancer Screening

Understanding Low-dose Computed Tomography (LDCT)

What Is LDCT?
Low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) is a type of lung cancer screening that uses special X-ray equipment and computers to produce detailed images of the inside of the chest. This screening exam looks for areas of abnormal tissue called nodules and can detect lung disease before symptoms begin.

Should I Receive LDCT Screening?
You should receive a lung cancer screening if you meet all the following guidelines*:

- Age 50 to 77
- Current smoker or have quit smoking within the last 15 years
- Have no symptoms of lung cancer
- Have a tobacco smoking history of at least “20 pack years” (an average of 1 pack a day for 20 years)

A screening is a medical term for a test used to find a disease before it causes symptoms or problems.

Lung cancer screening is done to find lung cancer before it has spread.

*If you have Medicare, LDCT is covered once a year if you meet these guidelines. Other insurance plans may cover this screening but may have different guidelines.

LDCT requires a doctor’s order. Your doctor will discuss this screening exam with you to determine if you meet the guidelines for LDCT.

Benefits of LDCT
LDCT has been shown to reduce the number of deaths from lung cancer in patients at high risk. Lung cancer is often undetected until it has spread outside the lung. LDCT is a unique test that can detect even very small nodules in the lungs. Lung cancer that is detected through LDCT is often considered early stage. Treatment success is much more likely when lung cancer is detected early.

LDCT takes only a few minutes and uses up to 90 percent less radiation than the traditional type of CT scan. No contrast material is used and the test does not affect any metal parts such as a pacemaker or artificial joint. LDCT is painless and without side effects.

Licking Memorial Health Systems
1320 West Main Street • Newark, Ohio 43055
(220) 564-4000 • LMHealth.org

What to Expect
During an LDCT scan, you will lie on a table while an X-ray machine uses a small amount of radiation to make detailed images of your lungs.

Your Role
LDCT is part of a larger program designed to support patients who are at risk for lung cancer. If you meet the guidelines for LDCT, you will receive a baseline-screening exam.

Quit Smoking Now

Contact LMHS Quit for Your Health at (220) 564-7848 (QUIT).

If you smoke or use any type of tobacco product, it is important that you quit. Lung cancer screening should never be done in place of quitting the use of tobacco. Smoking causes most cases of lung cancer in the United States. Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) has a tobacco cessation program to help you quit. Talk to your doctor about options.

Be sure to keep all follow-up appointments.

Understanding Your Results

<u>If a Nodule Is Found on Your LDCT</u>
Most lung nodules are not cancer. If a nodule is found on your screening exam, you will be scheduled for follow-up based on your results, including repeat LDCT exams. If the nodule is large, your doctor may advise a repeat LDCT to see if the nodule changes in size. If the nodule is larger on follow-up exam, the doctor may order an advanced test, such as a CT with contrast and/or the removal of a tissue sample (lung biopsy). This sample is sent to the lab to be analyzed.

<u>If No Nodules Are Found on Your LDCT</u>
If no nodules are found on your screening exam, you will receive a repeat LDCT exam once a year until you no longer meet the screening guidelines.

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This Care Gram is for information purposes only. It may become out-of-date over time. Ask a doctor or a healthcare professional about your specific condition.