

Patient information on lung nodules

You recently had a CT scan of your chest as part of a lung health check. A lung specialist has reviewed your recent lung scan and found a lung nodule/s. This is a common finding and is usually nothing to worry about, but we keep an eye on them to see if they change. Lung nodules are often very small, don't have any symptoms, and do not affect the function of the lungs or interfere with breathing.

What is a lung nodule?

A lung nodule is a very small mass of tissue in the lung. They appear as a round white shadow seen on a CT scan which measures 3cm/1 inch or smaller. A person may have several nodules, but this is not necessarily more serious than just having one.

What causes lung nodules?

Lung nodules are fairly common:

- About 1 in 4 (25%) of older people who smoke or who have smoked have nodules
- About 1 in 10 people who have never smoked may also have nodules
- Nodules may be caused by scarring from lung infections
- They are common in people who have had tuberculosis (TB) in the past

Why do we monitor the nodules?

Once discovered, it is important to observe the appearance of the nodule(s) over time with follow up scans. Most lung nodules stay exactly the same size, get smaller or even disappear. If a nodule has not increased in size over a series of scans, no more follow up is required. For a small number of people the nodule may require further tests to determine if it is early lung cancer.

Next steps

You will be offered one or more further scans of your chest over the next year. Then depending on what this scan shows we may be happy to discharge you or you may need further scans over the next few years. Information on when your next scan is scheduled will be sent to you closer to the date.

After each scan, the images will be reviewed by a lung specialist and the nodules measured. Results from the scan will be available within 4 weeks and you will be contacted by telephone or letter by the lung health check team, where any next steps will be discussed.

More information

If you have any questions about this scan result, please do not hesitate to telephone **020 3835 1600** to speak to a member of the Lung Health Check team.

In the meantime, if you have any chest symptoms, such as a chest pain, persistent cough, unexplained persistent breathlessness, coughing blood, or have unexplained weight loss, please contact your GP practice to get this checked.

For more information about lung nodules, please visit the RM Partners website:
rmpartners.nhs.uk/nodulesresources
