

DOES IT MATTER WHERE MY FOLLOW UP SCAN IS DONE?

Ideally, your follow up scan should be carried out in the same hospital that your initial scan was completed. Different hospitals have slight variations in CT scanning protocols and CT machines. Even a 1mm difference in nodule size or pulmonary nodule volume can influence your doctor's management plan. As such try to ensure all follow up scans are done in the same hospital. It is important your doctor knows if you have had a chest x-ray or CT scan in another institute so they can compare your scans if necessary.

WHAT IF I'M STILL SMOKING?

Pulmonary nodules have increased potential to become cancerous with continued smoking. Quitting smoking is one of the most important lifestyle changes that you can do to improve your long term health and to reduce your risk of lung cancer.

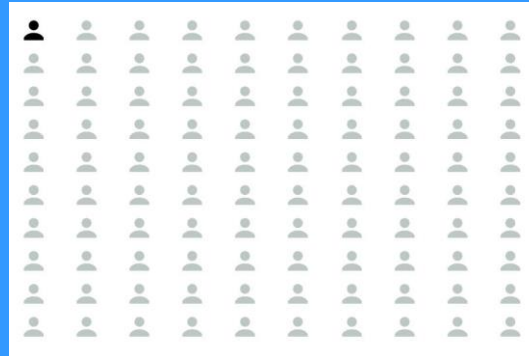
Please do not hesitate to ask your doctor for help and advice with smoking cessation.

IN SUMMARY:

- Most small nodules are not cancer, and the majority are simply incidental old scar tissue in your lung that rarely cause any symptoms.
- Most patients with small nodules will need follow up CT scans.
- The smaller the nodule, the lower the chance of it being cancer.
- The longer a nodule is stable on CT, the less chance of it being something sinister like an early cancer.
- If you are still smoking, quitting is the most important lifestyle change you can do.
- Please share your concerns with your medical team.

SHOULD I WORRY THAT I HAVE A NODULE?

Pulmonary nodules are very common and the vast majority are benign. In fact, on average ~ 99% are simply incidental findings on CT causing no problems and no symptoms. Fewer than 1% (1 person per 100) of nodules grow over time and makes your doctor more concerned re early cancers. Cancerous nodules are more likely in older people and patients who are or have smoked. However, even in smokers the vast majority of these pulmonary nodules are not early lung cancer.



Only 1 out of 100 people's pulmonary nodule turn out to be cancer

Pulmonary Nodule: Patient Information Leaflet



For further information or assistance in stopping smoking contact:
www.Quit.ie
FREECALL 1800 201 203
FREETEXT QUIT to 50100

This leaflet provides information for people who have been found to have a pulmonary nodule.

WHAT IS A PULMONARY NODULE?

A pulmonary nodule is a small round/oval shaped area that is more solid than normal lung tissue. It is often referred to as a 'coin lesion', a 'shadow' or a 'spot on the lung'. Nodules can range from a millimeter in size up to 3cm (30mm). Anything larger than 3cm in the lung is called a 'lung mass'.

WHAT CAUSES PULMONARY NODULES?

Pulmonary nodules can be caused by:

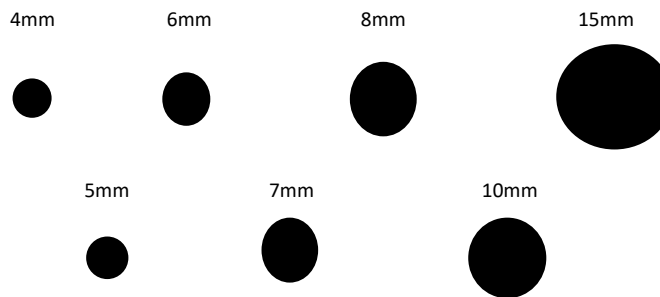
- Old Scars
- Infections (current or old)
- Mucus plugs
- Inflammatory lung diseases eg Sarcoidosis/Rheumatoid arthritis
- Smoking
- Dust exposures
- Early Cancer
- Other causes

Over 99% of nodules are benign, meaning they are not related to cancer and generally these do not cause any problems nor symptoms.

The smaller the nodule the less likely it is to be cancerous

Pulmonary nodules are very common. They are often found by accident (incidentally) on a chest X-Ray or CT scan. In a small number of people (~1%) the nodule could be a very early lung cancer or very rarely a secondary cancer that has spread from elsewhere in the body. The best way to determine if this is an early cancer is through CT surveillance (regular monitoring scans) to see if these change in size or shape over time. Your doctor will discuss timing of these scans based on characteristics of your nodule.

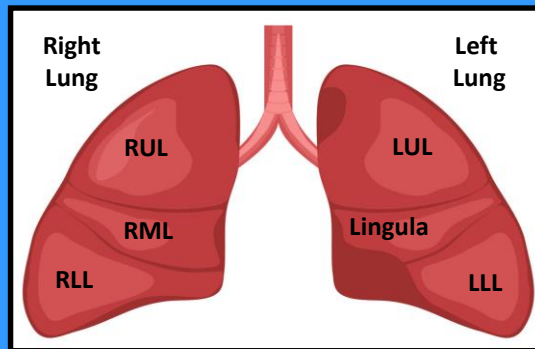
WHAT SIZE NODULE DO I HAVE?



QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR RESULTS?

1. What size nodule was found?

2. Where is it?



3. How many months before my next CT Lung scan?

WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO NODULES?

Over time, a nodule can remain stable, it can grow in size or it can shrink and disappear.

The longer a nodule is stable, the more reassured we are, meaning if the first follow up CT scan shows no change, the chance of future growth is less. The smaller a nodule is, the lower the risk that it may develop into cancer.

WHAT TEST MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT?

Once you have been found to have a pulmonary nodule, your doctor will evaluate your individual risk factors to determine any further tests that you may require.

A follow up CT scan is often carried out to monitor any subtle growth in the pulmonary nodule. The frequency of these scans will be determined by your doctor using international guidelines, but often involves 2 to 3 further CT scans over a 2 year follow-up period.

In general, if the nodule has not grown in size over a period of 2 years, (or in some less common cases a 5 year period which your doctor will explain), international guidelines suggest stopping follow up scans as it's extremely unlikely for nodules to grow beyond this period.

In the ~1% of cases where a nodule grows in size, further tests may be required to evaluate if this is an early cancer.

WHAT IF MY NODULE IS CANCER?

If your pulmonary nodule does turn out to be a lung cancer, it is most likely an early stage lung cancer for which there are many treatment options, usually with the intention to cure, rather than just slowing it down. Please do not hesitate to discuss your concerns with your doctor.