

# The Decision: Should I Screen for Lung Cancer?



This decision aid is to help you think about the pros and cons of lung cancer screening, so you can make the right choice for you.

- Lung cancer can occur without symptoms in the early stages and it can grow quickly.
- The goal of lung cancer screening is to find lung cancer early, so that it can be treated and cured.
- Screening for lung cancer uses a low-dose CT or CAT scan to take pictures of your lungs. It takes about 10 minutes, it is painless, and you keep your clothes on during the process

## Am I Eligible for Lung Cancer Screening?

To be eligible you must meet all of the following:

- You are 50 – 77 years old
- You smoked at least a pack per day for a total of 20 or more years, or 2 packs per day for a total of 10 years (1 pack = 20 cigarettes)
- You currently smoke or quit less than 15 years ago
- You do not have symptoms of lung cancer (coughing up blood, unexplained weight loss - people with these symptoms need different testing)

## What is My Risk of Having Lung Cancer?



I am 70 years old, smoked 1 pack per day for 15 years, and quit 30 years ago.



Patient 1

I am 70 years old, smoked 1 pack per day for 30 years, and quit 10 years ago; no symptoms.



Patient 2

I am 70 years old, smoked 1 pack per day for 40 years, and currently smoke; no symptoms.



Patient 3

Low Risk

High Risk

Patient 1 would not likely benefit from screening

Patient 2 should consider a conversation with a doctor about screening

Patient 3 should prioritize a conversation with a doctor about screening

Where can I get more details?

Free online risk calculator: <https://shouldiscreen.com>  
More in-depth information: <https://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/decision-aids/lung-cancer-screening/patient.html>

# What Are the Pros and Cons of Screening?

## Pros



While this can be stressful to think about, finding lung cancer early can **reduce the risk of dying**.

Screening can give you peace of mind

Screening is painless and requires no preparation

A low-dose screen uses more radiation than a chest x-ray, but less than a normal CT scan.

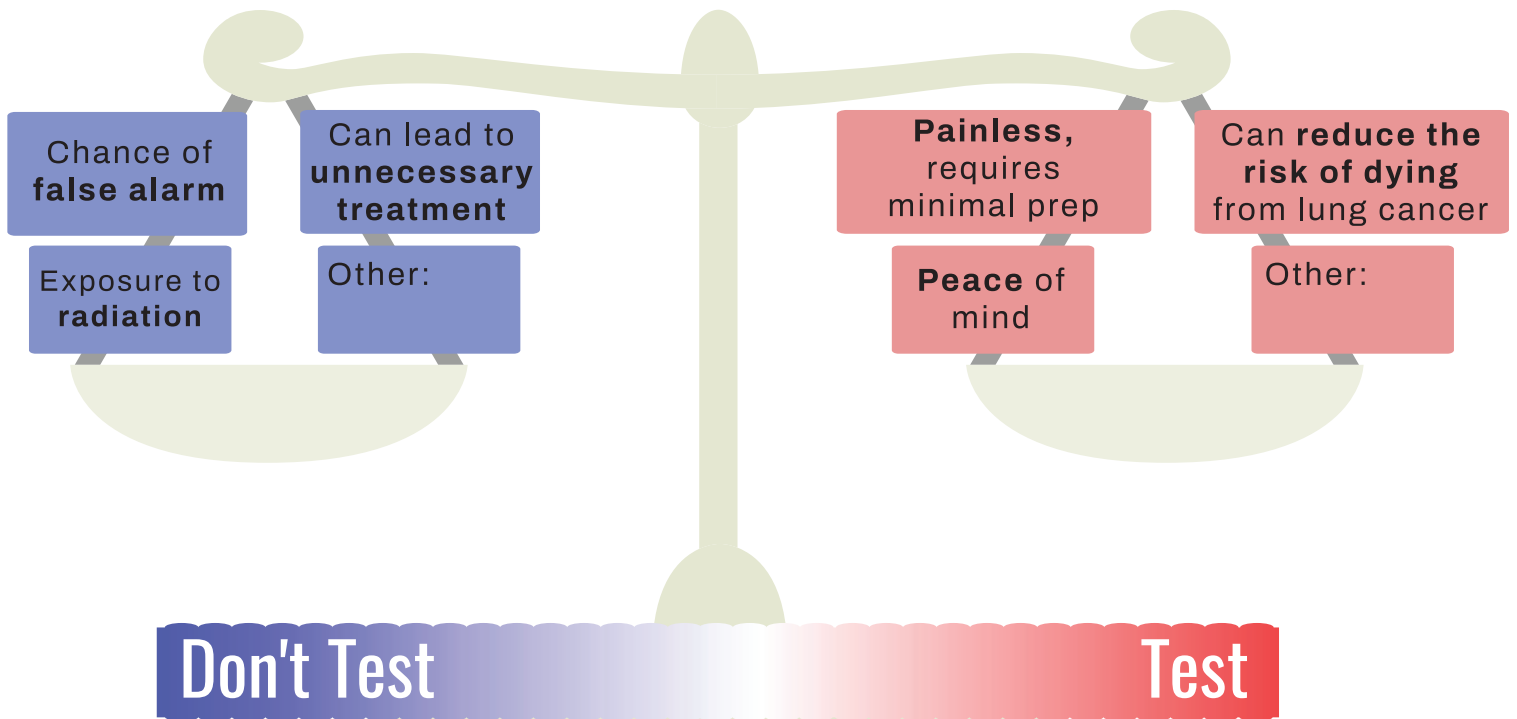
## Cons



Screening sometimes finds things that look like cancer, but are not. This is called a **false positive**. Getting a false positive test can cause you to worry unnecessarily. Out of 100 people, about 40 will have a positive CT scan. Of those 40, about 5 actually have lung cancer.

More procedures might be needed to see if a positive result is a false alarm, which can be invasive and have their own harms.

## What Is the Right Choice For YOU?



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

Even with lung cancer screening, **quitting smoking or staying quit is still the best thing you can do.**

If you are currently smoking, we are here to help.

Stopping smoking is not easy. There are a lot of options to support you, including medications. Talk to your doctor.

For more help contact the Colorado Quitline at [1-800-QUITNOW](tel:1-800-QUITNOW), or at [CoQuitline.org](http://CoQuitline.org).

### For Providers

**G0296** – Counseling visit to discuss need for lung cancer screening (LDCT) using low dose CT scan (service is for eligibility determination and shared decision making)  
**71271** – Low dose CT scan (LDCT) for lung cancer screening  
**99406** - Intermediate Smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling visit is greater than three minutes, but not more than 10 minutes  
**99407** - Intensive Smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling visit is greater than 10 minutes