



Lung Cancer Screening Programme Frequently Asked Questions

Section 1: Questions about the Lung Cancer Screening Programme

Q. What is the Lung Cancer Screening programme?

A. The Lung Cancer Screening Programme is a national programme which offers a free service for those aged 55 to 74 who have ever smoked. Invites will be sent out to people aged 55-74 and those who are current smokers or have ever smoked will be invited for an initial conversation with a health professional. If needed, they will then have a simple scan which can identify signs of cancer at an early stage when it is much more treatable – saving lives.

Q. What is the aim of the Lung Cancer Screening Programme?

A. The aim of the programme is to detect lung cancer and disease early so that people can be treated sooner and more effectively – ultimately saving more lives. Lung cancer often has no symptoms in the earlier stages which can result in it not being found until the later stages when outcomes are less favourable.

Q. What is involved in having a check of the lungs?

A. The lung health check takes part in several stages. You will initially have a phone discussion to check that a lung health check is right for you. If it is, an appointment with a specially trained nurse to assess your risk level will then be arranged. If you are found to be at high risk of having lung cancer you will then be invited to have a low dose CT scan so we can capture an image of your lungs and identify if there are any issues which need further investigation or treatment. The scan will usually happen on the same day as the appointment with the nurse.

Q. Why is the Lung Cancer Screening Programme only being offered to smokers or past smokers in a certain age range?

A. Lung Cancer Screening Programme is currently being offered to those most at risk of getting lung cancer. Data shows those between the age of 55 and 74 who currently or previously smoked are at a higher risk than others of getting lung cancer. If you display any symptoms or have any concerns about your lung health, you should book an appointment to see your GP straight away.

Q. Why have I been sent a letter about this programme, I have never smoked?

A. We need to make sure that everyone appropriate is included and not miss everyone. This will result in letters being sent to people who haven't smoked. If you receive a letter and do not think the programme is right for you, please let us know by calling the number on your letter.

Section 2: Questions about Lung Cancer Screening Programme in north east London

Q. Which areas are taking part?

A. In north east London, residents in Barking and Dagenham, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Havering who are aged 55-74 and are smokers or former smokers are being invited. This will be extended to other boroughs in north east London in the future.

Q. How did you choose the order of boroughs to take part?

A. This was based on data on the number of smokers in each area. We chose the areas with the highest smoking rates, as this will have the biggest impact.

Q. Where will lung health checks take place?

A. The first phase will be carried out via phone call. If appropriate, you will then be invited to one of our units to have face to face assessment by the nurse, and, where indicated, a CT scan. The CT scans will be carried out by radiographers on mobile units. These are located in the following locations:

Barking & Dagenham residents:

Barking Sporthouse and Gym, Mayesbrook Park, Lodge Ave, Dagenham, RM8 2JR
<https://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/tlhc-BD>

Tower Hamlets and Newham residents:

Asda Superstore Car Park, Isle of Dogs, 151 East Ferry Road, London E14 3BT
<https://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/tlhc-TH>

Havering residents:

Tesco Extra, Bridge Road, Rainham, RM13 9YZ
<https://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/tlhc-Havering>

Q. Why isn't it available in my area?

A. The Targeted Lung Health Check Programme is being rolled out across England. The areas with higher lung cancer rates are being prioritised first and new locations will be available in the future.

If you are worried about any of the below symptoms, please see your GP as soon as possible:

- A persistent cough or change in your normal cough
- Coughing up blood
- Being short of breath
- Unexplained tiredness or weight loss
- An ache or pain when breathing or coughing
- Appetite loss

Section 3: Questions about the scan

Q. What is a CT scan?

A. It is a special CT (Computed Tomography) scan that uses a very low dose of radiation and a computer to take a detailed picture of your lungs. You can watch our video that shows what your scan will be like here:

<https://youtu.be/bqEhBH8Sfq8?si=c88stVUkYUR0eYbj>

Q. Is it uncomfortable?

The scan is painless and you will be able to eat, drink and drive as normal before and after your scan.

Q. Are there any risks to having a CT scan?

A. CT scanners use a small amount of radiation to produce pictures of your lungs. By using the very latest CT scanners, we are able to reduce the amount of radiation needed. The chance of this scan saving your life by detecting an early cancer is far greater than the chance of the scan causing you any harm.

Q. What will happen at the CT scan?

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

When a scan is taken, you will need to lie still and follow simple breathing instructions for 10 seconds. This makes sure the pictures are not blurred. You can watch our video that shows what your scan will be like here.

Q. Do I have to get undressed if I need a CT Scan?

A. You may need to remove your coat, but you can leave your clothing on.

Q. Can I bring someone along with me to the appointment?

A. Someone may accompany you to the appointment, but they won't be able to go into the scanner with you as space on the CT scanner unit is very limited. We suggest that their relatives, friends, or carers can wait outside or in their car whilst you are having your appointment.

Q. Where will the scan take place?

The scan will take place in a lung scanning truck which is located in the following places:

Barking & Dagenham residents:

Barking Sporthouse and Gym, Mayesbrook Park, Lodge Ave, Dagenham, RM8 2JR
<https://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/tlhc-BD>

Tower Hamlets and Newham residents:

Asda Superstore Car Park, Isle of Dogs, 151 East Ferry Road, London E14 3BT
<https://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/tlhc-TH>

Havering residents:

Tesco Extra, Bridge Road, Rainham, RM13 9YZ
<https://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/tlhc-Havering>

Q. I'm eligible for the non-emergency patient transport service - will I still be able to book this for my lung health check appointment?

A. Yes. If you are eligible for this service, please book your transport to your lung health check appointment in your usual way.

Q. What happens after a lung health check?

A. Should anything be identified either during the discussion with a nurse or from the CT scan, then you will be contacted by telephone or letter with the next steps. If you have any questions you can speak to the staff on site, or follow the instructions in your letter.

Q. When do I get the results?

A. You will get your results from us within four weeks.

Section 4: Questions about lung cancer

Q. What are the signs of lung cancer?

A. It is important to look out for anything that is unusual for you, especially:

- A persistent cough or change in your normal cough
- Coughing up blood
- Being short of breath
- Unexplained tiredness or weight loss
- An ache or pain when breathing or coughing
- Appetite loss

If you notice one or more of these symptoms, see your GP as soon as possible. Do not wait for another scan.

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

A. Many people who have been smoking for years and who have tried to quit multiple times have successfully stopped smoking. If you do smoke and would like to stop, there are friendly, free and local stop smoking services waiting for you to get in touch.

The nurse at your Targeted Lung Health Check can put you in touch with these services. You can also ask your GP or contact NHS Smokefree on 0300 123 1044 or visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree

Q. How can I tell the difference between symptoms of lung cancer and Covid?

A. We understand that some symptoms of lung cancer are like those of coronavirus. It is important to look out for anything that is unusual for you. If you notice any of the following, without coronavirus symptoms, please contact your GP as soon as possible for:

- Unexplained persistent cough
- Unexplained persistent breathlessness
- Fatigue lasting four or more weeks
- Persistent or recurrent chest infection
- Unexplained weight loss
- Appetite loss

Q. Where can I get support to stop smoking?

A. For advice on information on how to stop smoking, visit <https://stopsmokinglondon.com/>

Local services:

Barking and Dagenham: <https://www.lbdd.gov.uk/adult-health-and-social-care/health-and-wellbeing/stop-smoking>

Tower Hamlets: <https://www.towerhamletsconnect.org/information-and-advice/looking-after-yourself/addictions/smoking/>

Newham: <https://www.newham.gov.uk/health-adult-social-care/help-quit-smoking>

Havering: <https://www.havering.gov.uk/public-health/stopping-smoking-saves-lives>

Q. Where I can I get more support and information about lung cancer?

A. The following organisations provide a range of really helpful tools and information:

Roy Castle Lung Foundation: <https://roycastle.org/>

Cancer Research UK: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/>

Macmillan Cancer Support: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/>

British Lung Foundation: <https://www.blf.org.uk/>