

Respiratory

Pulmonary Nodule

What is a Pulmonary nodule?

A lung nodule is an area of round shadowing usually smaller than 1cm in the lung and can be seen on a CT scan of the chest or occasionally a chest x-ray.

Why do pulmonary nodules occur?

Lung nodules are common. Around 1 in 4 (25%) of older people who smoke or who are ex-smokers have lung nodules. Approximately 1 in 10 people (10%) who have not smoked may also have lung nodules.

Most nodules are benign (non-cancerous) and may be caused by scarring from previous lung infections and inflammation. They are common in people who have had TB (Tuberculosis), and can occur in people who have other conditions such as Rheumatoid arthritis.

In a very small proportion of people, a lung nodule can develop into a cancer, represent an early lung cancer or cancer from another part of the body.

Does it cause any symptoms?

Lung nodules generally do not cause any symptoms. However, if you are experiencing symptoms related to your chest, this is most likely due to an underlying chest condition which may need review by your GP or at the hospital.

How long has the pulmonary nodule been there?

The lack of symptoms makes it difficult to be sure how long it has been there. It is often found incidentally when a person has a CT scan for another reason.

What is the cause of my pulmonary nodule?

It is not always possible to know the cause of a nodule from the CT scan alone.

Do we need to keep an eye on the nodule?

Nodules are small and therefore a biopsy (a test performed to get a piece of the nodule) may be difficult and may not be safe.

We monitor the size of the nodule by repeating a CT scan after a certain amount of time to see whether it grows.

Benign (non-cancerous) nodules grow very slowly, or more commonly do not grow at all. On the other hand cancerous nodules usually grow very slowly.

We can check if the nodule is changing by repeating a chest x-ray or more commonly a CT scan over a period of months or years.

Because nodules can change very slowly there is no point in doing chest x-rays or CT scans any sooner than this.

What happens next?

If you are not already under a chest specialist / respiratory consultant, you may be referred to one for further management (not necessarily an outpatient appointment at this stage).

In most instances a repeat CT scan will be arranged or occasionally a repeat chest x-ray. This is usually done between 3 and 12 months after your first CT scan.

In some cases nodules do not require any further CT scans.

The timing of your next scan is based on national guidance and will be decided by a doctor taking into consideration a number of factors which include:

- The appearance of the nodule
- Whether you currently smoke or have smoked in the past
- Any medical problems (including a history of active or previous cancer)

It may be necessary to have a number of CT scans over 2 years or more

The benefit of follow up is to ensure early detection of any change or growth in the nodule which may require further tests.

In some cases you may be asked to have another scan called a PET-CT (Positron Emission Tomography).

Once you have had your repeat scan your chest specialist will write to you or arrange a discussion with you about the results and the need for any further scans.

If you have any of the following symptoms between your scans, then you should contact your GP who may wish to contact your chest specialist to see you sooner or you can contact the respiratory secretaries who can inform your chest specialist of any change in your condition.

- Pain in your chest
- Shortness of breath (New or a change from your baseline)
- Coughing up of blood
- Repeated chest infections.

Who can I contact if I have further questions?

If you have any further questions or worries, please feel free to contact the respiratory secretaries.

Your GP will also be kept informed of your progress by the hospital team and can advise you.

Respiratory Secretaries:

Dr Thomas, Dr Biswas, Dr Hardy, Dr Nayyar, Dr Ali: 01422 223122

Dr Ting, Dr Khan, Dr Liew, Dr Kumar, Dr Sakka, Dr Spencer: 01484 355748

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Dr Sanjay Kumar
Consultant Respiratory Physician and Lung Cancer Lead

Telephone No: 01484 355748

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਾਫ਼ੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات کسری اور فارمیٹ کی زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم
المذكور أعلاه"