

UCLA Lung Screening Clinic monitors high-risk patients to catch lung cancer early



The UCLA Lung Screening Clinic offers a sophisticated program to monitor high-risk patients with high-quality computed tomography (CT) imaging while exposing them to substantially less radiation than a typical CT scan. The clinic is a collaborative effort that brings together UCLA experts in thoracic imaging, pulmonary medicine, medical oncology, radiation oncology and thoracic surgery in a program designed to monitor at regular intervals patients at high risk for developing lung cancer.

Who will benefit?

More than 200,000 new cases of lung cancer are diagnosed each year in the U.S. The prognosis is poor for patients whose cancer is detected in its advanced stages. The UCLA Lung Cancer Screening Clinic was conceived to promote early detection and treatment of lung cancer to help improve survival rates.

Lung screening CT scans offer detailed images with a fraction of the radiation exposure

“Early detection of lung cancer will initiate prompt management and treatment, which may improve survival,” explains Jay M. Lee, M.D., surgical director of the UCLA Thoracic Oncology Program. “This can best be achieved with regular follow-up of high-risk patients and an organized program to monitor lung nodules and lung spots.”

The UCLA Lung Screening Clinic monitors patients using a screening chest CT scan that carries one-half to one-fifth the radiation exposure of a typical CT scan. Regular scans help promote early detection of lung cancer and prevent unnecessary surgery on still-harmless lung nodules.



Candidates for the UCLA Lung Screening Clinic include:

- Patients with a previous history of lung cancer
- Current and former smokers
- Those exposed to second-hand smoke
- Those exposed to asbestos
- Patients with lung nodules or lung spots seen on X-ray or CT scan
- Others at high risk for lung cancer

How the clinic works

New patients at the clinic are first seen by a thoracic surgeon and nurse practitioner, who review their medical history and any prior imaging studies. Clinic physicians determine an optimum schedule of follow-up imaging to detect cancer at an early stage when it is most treatable. These follow-up visits each include a screening chest CT scan — one that carries one-half to one-fifth the radiation exposure of a typical CT scan. UCLA thoracic radiologists interpret these screening CT images.

Regular scans monitor patients' lung nodules and lung spots, detecting changes that signal cancer while preventing unnecessary surgery on still-harmless nodules. The clinic draws on the knowledge and experience of a wide range of pulmonary and cancer specialists to offer patients access to a wealth of expertise. Clinic patients requiring further treatment can benefit from the full resources of a medical center rated among the top three in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*.

Key Personnel

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