

# Lung Nodules

## Information for patients, relatives and carers

### Introduction

This leaflet is designed to give you information about lung nodules. We hope that it will help to answer some of the questions that you, or those who care for you, may have.

### What is a lung nodule?

A nodule is a small spot in the lungs seen on a CT scan or Chest x-ray. It does not cause any symptoms. Most are found by chance when you have had a scan for another reason.

### Who gets lung nodules?

Lung nodules are common and are found in approximately 1 in 4 (25%) of people over 55 who smoke or are ex-smokers. People who have never smoked may also have lung nodules.

Most nodules, over 98%, are benign (non-cancerous). Often, they do not grow or grow very slowly.

In a small number of cases, a lung nodule could be a very early cancer. These nodules will grow eventually, although this can happen slowly.

### What action is required?

As nodules are small, a biopsy (a test to obtain a sample) may be very difficult and may cause harm. Instead, we monitor the nodule by repeating the scan after a certain time period (usually months or years) to see whether it has grown. As nodules can change very slowly there is no need to do chest x-rays or CT scan more regularly than this.

Nodules are common and so The British Thoracic Society created very clear guidelines on how to monitor them. We refer to these when making decisions about when to repeat a scan. We also regularly discuss scans with our colleagues in the X-ray department (Consultant Radiologists) for opinions about scans and how nodules change over time.

If there is growth of your nodule the respiratory team will contact you to discuss further tests.

Please contact your GP if you notice any of the following:

- Worsening cough
- Increased shortness of breath
- Chest pains
- Repeated chest infections
- Weight loss
- Coughing up blood

### Smoking

If you are still smoking the best thing you can do to improve your health is to stop. Ask your GP / Pharmacist if you need any advice or support to help you stop.

This information is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please ask a member of staff.