



Understanding Lung Nodules

Lung nodules are abnormal spots that may show up on your lung cancer screening CT scan or other imaging test. Nodules are also called lesions, coin lesions, growths, or solitary pulmonary nodules.

Many people have lung nodules by age 50. Most lung nodules are not cancer, but some lung nodules need more testing.

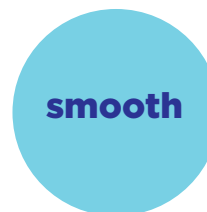
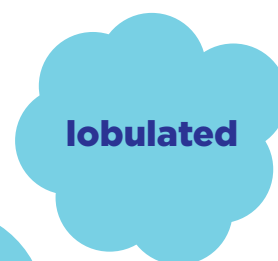
Nodule Features

Margin

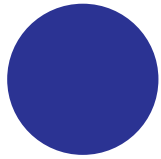
The margin is where the edges of the nodule touch normal lung tissue. The margins of many cancers are uneven, look spiky, and are sometimes called spiculated. Most nodules that are not cancer have smooth or rounded margins or look like many round nodules together – also called lobulated.

Density

Density describes how compact or thick something is. A nodule is more dense than normal lung tissue and looks gray on a CT scan. Some nodules have pieces of calcium inside of them that look white like bone. These are called calcified nodules and are less likely to be cancer.



For more information, visit go2.org or call the HelpLine at 1-800-298-2436.



20mm/2cm



15mm/1.5cm



10mm/1cm



5mm



1mm

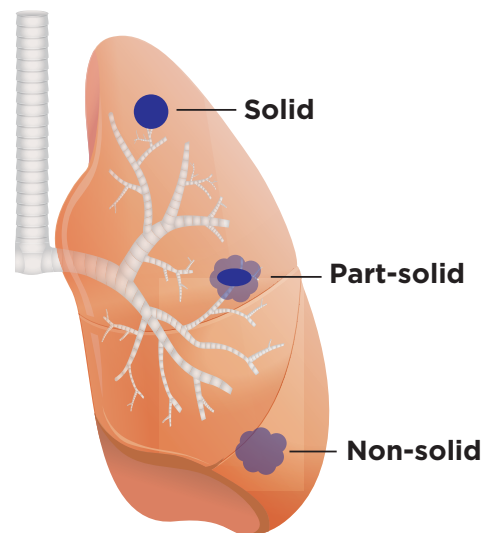
mm = millimeters, cm = centimeters

Size

Most small nodules are not cancer. If you have a nodule and you are at high risk for lung cancer, you may be asked to come back in a year or sooner for another screening test just to make sure it hasn't changed. Smaller nodules are usually managed in this way, while larger nodules may need more testing. Nodule size may be listed in centimeters or millimeters, as shown above.

Consistency

When a nodule is solid, it is called a solid nodule. In some cases, a nodule may have a solid part with a hazy part around it. These are called part-solid or semi-solid. Nodules that are hazy with no solid parts are called non-solid or ground glass nodules (GGN) because they look like ground glass.



What's Next?

More tests or a biopsy will be needed if nodules are large, look suspicious, or change over time. Your healthcare team can help you choose your best next step.

Always contact your healthcare team if you have questions or concerns about your plan.



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