Lung Cancer Screening: What does it look like?

Michael Brooks, MD

Department of Radiology

Questions Answered

What is it like for the patient?

What is it like for the clinician?

What do the images look like?

Q/A What is it like for the radiologist?



What is it like for the patient?



Low-dose non-contrast chest CT

No IV.

Radiation dose is 5-10 times less than conventional CT.

This is the easy part.



What is it like for the clinician?



The Report

Solid nodules

- 4 mm or less -- continue with annual screening
- 5-6 mm -- additional six month f/u CT
- 7-10 mm additional three month f/u CT
- Bigger than a centimeter? WIDCIO



The Report

Sub-solid nodules

6 mm or more – additional 3 mo. f/u

Enlarged lymph nodes

Nobody knows, radiologist intuition



Please don't order a PET/CT



What do I tell my patient?

~20% of screens will require further eval.

In ~80% of cases, this will initially be a follow-up scan.

In about 4% of the positive screens, cancer is eventually diagnosed.



What does the scan look like?





Conventional Dose

Low Dose











