

# CT screening identifies curable lung cancers

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By: Reuters Health

NEW YORK (Reuters Health), Feb 14 - Computed tomography (CT) screening identifies many cases of nonmetastatic lung cancer, according to the International Early Lung Cancer Action Program Investigators. Size of the tumor is associated with the likelihood of finding metastases, and thus is of prognostic value, the researchers report in the February 13, 2006, issue of the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

Dr. Claudia I. Henschke, from Weill Cornell Medical Center in New York, and her group obtained results for nearly 29,000 people who underwent CT screening between 1993 and 2004. A total of 464 cases of lung cancer were screen diagnosed, including 436 non-small cell lung cancers and 28 cases of small cell lung cancer.

Among non-small cell lung cancer cases, the proportion of cases with no metastases ranged from 91% of patients in whom the tumor was 15 mm or smaller, to 55% of those with tumors 36 mm or greater.

The lymph node status was positively associated with tumor size for solid nodules -- that is, the nodule obscured the entire lung parenchyma within it -- and "suggestive" for part-solid tumors. However, the relationship was absent for nonsolid nodules, which were diagnosed as noninvasive adenocarcinomas or adenocarcinoma-mixed subtype with a small invasive component.

All of the small cell cancers presented as solid nodules. For these, the proportion of cases with no metastases was 67% for tumors 25 mm or less versus 23% for larger tumors.

"The pattern confirmed herein suggests the usefulness of finding latent cancers at small sizes," the authors point out. "Most lung cancers without evidence of lymph node metastases are curable, with the curability rate being higher at smaller sizes."

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[Arch Intern Med](#) 2006;166:321-325.

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