



Coverage of Lung Cancer Screening with Low Dose Computed Tomography

Healthfirst Medicare Plans

Overview

Effective **February 10, 2022**, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has expanded eligibility for people with Medicare to qualify for lung cancer screening with Low Dose Computed Tomography (LDCT) by lowering the starting age for screening from 55 to 50 years, and also by reducing the tobacco smoking history from at least 30 packs per year to at least 20 packs per year.

This expanded coverage broadens access to lung-cancer screening to at-risk populations.

Expanded Eligibility Criteria

Medicare, including CompleteCare (HMO D-SNP), plan members may be eligible if:

- Age 50–77 years
- Asymptomatic (no signs or symptoms of lung cancer)
- Tobacco smoking history of at least 20 pack-years (one pack-year = smoking one pack per day for one year; 1 pack = 20 cigarettes)
- Current smoker or one who has quit smoking within the last 15 years; and
- Receive an order for lung cancer screening with LDCT

Screening Test Recommendation (LDCT)

The only recommended screening test for lung cancer is Low Dose Computed Tomography (LDCT), a unique computed tomography (CT) scan technique that combines special X-ray equipment with sophisticated computers to produce multiple, cross-sectional images of the inside of the body.

Provider Alert

Screening Test Enhancements (LDCT)

LDCT screening also simplifies requirements for the counseling and shared decision-making visit and removes the requirement for the reading radiologist to document participation in continuing medical education, thereby reducing the administrative burden on providers.

National Coverage Determination Requirement

CMS also reintroduced into the National Coverage Determination (NCD) criteria a requirement that obliges radiology imaging facilities to use a standardized lung nodule identification, classification, and reporting system.

Authorization is NOT required for this preventive benefit.

Should you have questions, please contact your network representative, or call Provider Services at **1-888-801-1660**, Monday to Friday, 8:30am–5:30pm.