CT screening improves lung cancer survival

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A U.S. study has determined annual, low-dose computerized tomography, or CT, screening increases lung cancer survival rates.

Researchers at the New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center say lung cancer can be detected at its very earliest stage in 85 percent of patients using annual low-dose CT screening. And, when followed by prompt surgical removal, the 10-year survival rate is 92 percent.

Lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer deaths among both men and women in the United States.

The study began in 1993 and has expanded into an international collaboration of 38 institutions in seven nations, making the International Early Lung Cancer Action Project the largest, long-term study to determine the usefulness of annual CT screening.

"We believe this study provides compelling evidence that CT screening for lung cancer offers new hope for millions of people at risk for this disease and could dramatically reverse lung cancer death rates," said Dr. Claudia Henschke, the study's lead author.

The research appears in the current issue of the New England Journal of Medicine.

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