

# National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Coal Workers' Health Surveillance Program Black Lung Screenings

*"The first priority and concern of all in the coal or mining industry must be the health and safety of our most precious resource, the miner."*

~Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, amended 1977

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Coal Workers' Health Surveillance Program (CWHSP) studies the causes and effects of respiratory diseases related to coal mine dust exposure and provides vital health information to coal miners through health screenings and surveillance.

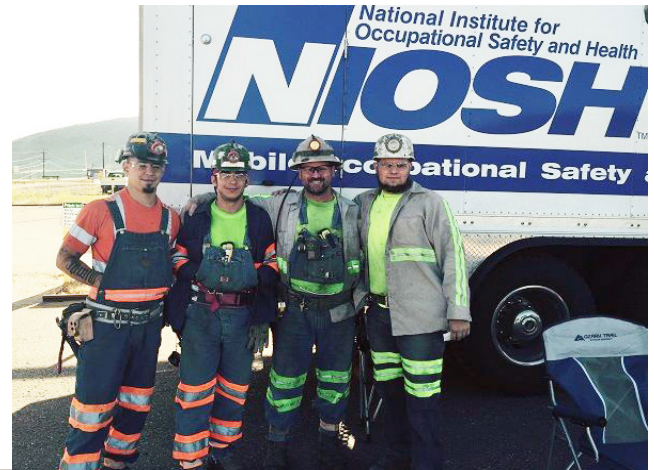


Photo by NIOSH

## Mobile Unit Screenings

NIOSH state-of-the-art mobile units travel to convenient community and mine locations to provide health screenings to all coal miners (past and present).

### Screenings include:

- Work history questionnaire
- Chest x-ray
- Respiratory assessment questionnaire
- Lung function testing (spirometry)
- Blood pressure screening

Screenings usually take about 30 minutes. NIOSH directly provides each miner with their screening results. By law, each person's results are confidential. No individual information is publicly disclosed.

### Participation in this program gives coal miners:

- An easy way of checking their health status
- A confidential report about their lung function
- A confidential report on whether or not they have evidence of black lung

## Clinic screenings

Black lung screenings are provided at NIOSH-approved clinics located in mining regions across the U.S. Find information about facilities on the NIOSH-Approved Facility Search and Map web page at [wwwn.cdc.gov/niosh-rhd/cwhsp/FacilityMap.aspx](http://wwwn.cdc.gov/niosh-rhd/cwhsp/FacilityMap.aspx).

## Coal Mine Dust Lung Disease

Exposure to dust in coal mines can cause several lung diseases. These include black lung, silicosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), bronchitis, and emphysema.



Photo by NIOSH



Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention  
National Institute for Occupational  
Safety and Health

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How often do the NIOSH mobile units provide lung screenings and where?

NIOSH mobile units travel to different coal mining regions across the United States every spring and summer. Locations are based each year on areas where more extensive health information of coal miners is needed.

## How will I know when lung screenings are available?

Announcements begin in March each year and run throughout the summer through NIOSH press releases and the Coal Workers' Health Surveillance web page at [cdc.gov/niosh/topics/cwhsp](https://cdc.gov/niosh/topics/cwhsp) and [NIOSH Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Announcements are also made through local newspapers and radio stations.

## Who can participate in the screenings?

All coal miners (current and former underground, surface, contract miners) are eligible to participate.

## Do I have to pay for lung screening?

No. Screenings are free to all former and current coal miners as part of the Federal Coal Mine Safety and Health Act.

## What is lung function testing (spirometry)?

Spirometry is a test that evaluates how well your lungs work by measuring how much air you can inhale and exhale, and how quickly you exhale. The test can help determine if a miner has a lung condition and helps to monitor conditions over time.

## When and how do I receive my screening results?

Miners will receive their confidential results within 4-6 weeks after testing. Results are sent by mail directly to the miner's home address.

## Does CWHSP save my results for future screenings or send them to my doctor?

Yes, we keep confidential records for each miner's screening results to compare with past and future screenings. This enables us to identify changes in your lung health. We can also send results to your doctor with a signed release from you.

## Who can participate in black lung screenings at clinics?

Active coal miners can visit NIOSH-approved clinics to receive their free mandatory or voluntary black lung screenings. Go to the NIOSH Approved Facility Search and Map web page at [wwwn.cdc.gov/niosh-rhd/cwhsp/FacilityMap.aspx](https://wwwn.cdc.gov/niosh-rhd/cwhsp/FacilityMap.aspx) to find approved facilities near you.



Photo by NIOSH

