

## How do I do the screening test?

The test is done in the privacy of your own home. The screening kit provides a simple way for you to collect a very small sample of your bowel motion (stools) onto a special card. A detailed instruction leaflet 'Bowel cancer screening – how to take the test' is available to show you how to take the test. Once you have collected a sample, the card is placed in a special envelope and posted to the screening laboratory. It is safe to send in the post. You may think that doing the test sounds a bit embarrassing or unpleasant but it will only take a few minutes. If you have any questions about how to use the test kit please call the Freephone Helpline number 0800 015 2514.

## When will I get my results?

You should get your results within two weeks of sending in your test. If you don't get your results within two weeks, call the freephone helpline on 0800 015 2514

## What do the results mean?

- A negative result means that blood was not found in your sample. Most people (about 98 out of 100) will receive a negative result. You will be offered bowel cancer screening again in two years time provided you remain within the screening age group.
- An unclear result means there was a slight suggestion of blood in your sample. Receiving an unclear result does not mean you have cancer, just that you need to do a Repeat Test ([FIT - Faecal Immunochemical Test](#)) to double check for any blood. About four people out of every 100 will receive an unclear result. Most people who do the repeat test will then receive a negative result.
- A positive result means that blood has been found in your sample. It is not a diagnosis of cancer but it does mean that you will be offered an appointment with a Specialist Screening Practitioner (SSP) to talk about further tests. About 10 in every 500 people tested will have a positive result. Even then, 9 out of every 10 of these will not have cancer. Blood in your bowel motions can also be caused by small

growths called polyps or other conditions such as haemorrhoids (piles).

## **What happens if my test result is positive?**

A positive test result means that blood has been found in your stools. You will be offered an appointment with a Specialist Screening Practitioner who will explain what further tests can be done. The most common test is called a colonoscopy. The Specialist Screening Practitioner will fully explain the colonoscopy procedure to you and assess your fitness for it. If you want to go ahead with the colonoscopy the nurse will book an appointment for you.

## **What happens to my sample once it has been tested?**

Once the sample has been tested at the laboratory, the result is recorded onto a computer database and the sample card is destroyed.

What happens to my information

- A copy of your results will be sent to your GP.
- The bowel cancer screening programme office needs to keep records of all people who have been screened and their results. Staff working for the programme may see your records. This information is used to make sure the programme is working to the high standard it should be. The information also shows how many cases of cancer have been picked up and makes sure that people are followed up with proper treatment.

If you need any further information on how your records are kept and used, you should contact the Freephone helpline 0800 015 2514.

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