

Bowel cancer screening

An easy guide



The NHS invites men and women for bowel cancer screening after their 60th birthday



You can call the freephone helpline for advice on **0800 707 60 60**

What is in this booklet

Page

Bowel cancer screening

3

Bowel cancer

4

Your choice

5

Doing the screening test

6

Screening test results

10

Keeping your bowel healthy

11

When you should go to your doctor

15

More information

16

Bowel cancer screening

3



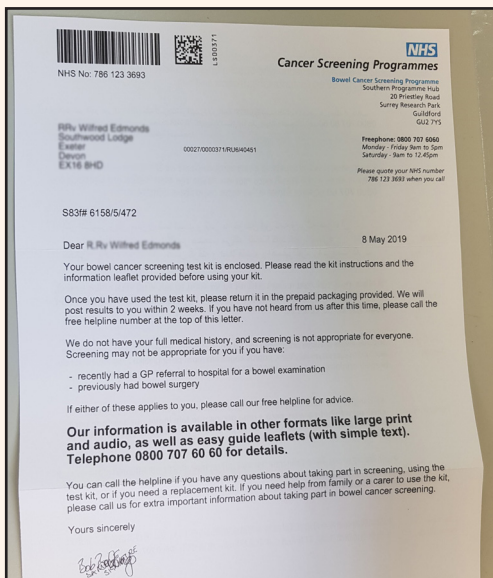
This booklet tells you about the bowel cancer screening test.

After your 60th birthday you get a screening test kit to do at home.

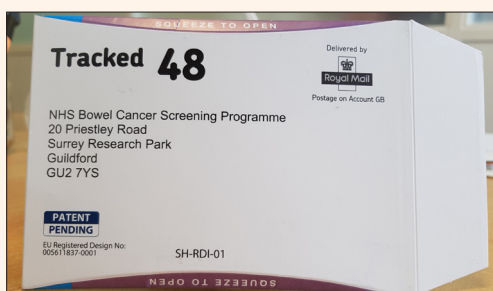


We will send you a box with:

- a test kit



- a letter



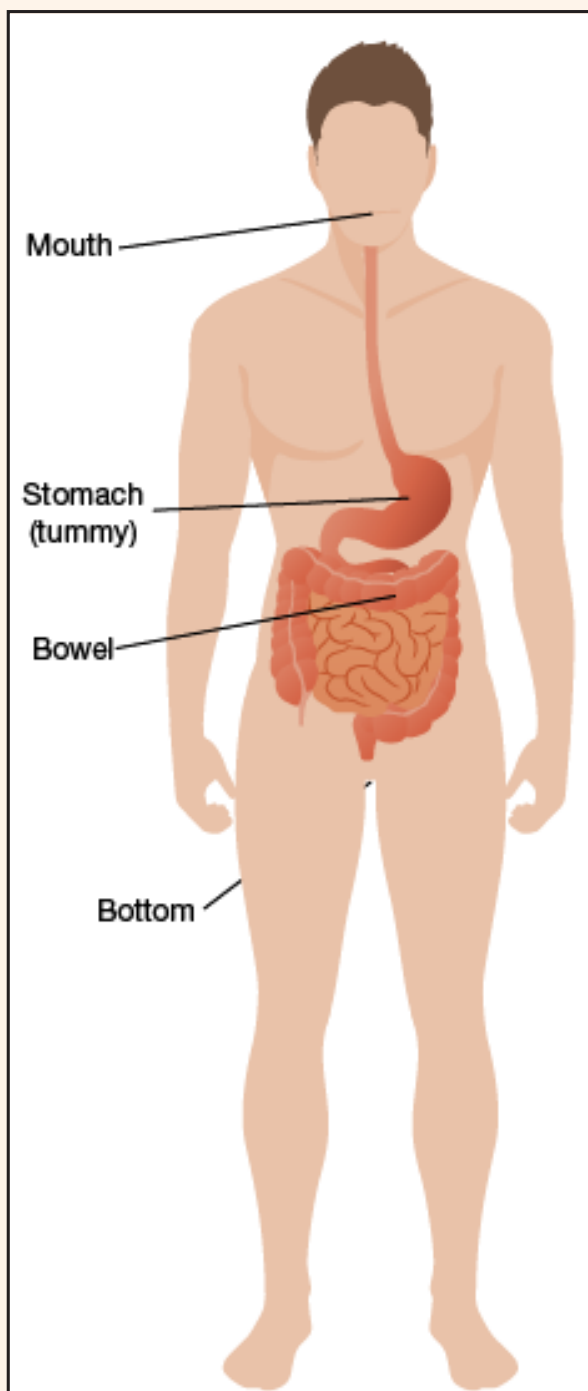
- a freepost envelope



Some people get a disease called bowel cancer.

This is a serious illness you can die from.

Bowel cancer screening helps find bowel cancer at an early stage.



Your bowel is inside your body.

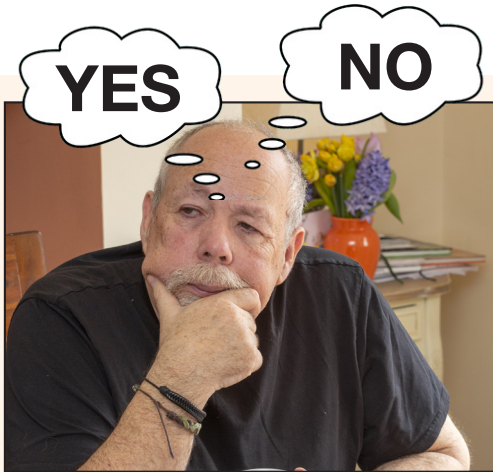
It connects your stomach (tummy) to your bottom.

The bowel takes away waste your body does not need.

This is called poo.

Your choice

5



It is your choice to do the test or not.



You can talk to your family or carer.

You can talk to a nurse or your doctor.

Or you can call the freephone number on **0800 707 60 60**

Good points



Doing the screening test can find early signs of bowel cancer.

If bowel cancer is found early you have a better chance of living.

You do the test at home.

Bad points



The screening test will find most bowel cancers but some can be missed.

Doing the screening test

6



The test looks for tiny amounts of blood in your poo.

You can do the test on your own or you can ask someone to help you.

To do the screening test, you need to collect a small amount of your poo.



To catch your poo you can use:

- toilet paper



- a clean empty container



Write the date on the label of your test kit.



Take the kit into the bathroom.



Put toilet paper inside the container you are using to collect the poo.



Catch your poo before it goes in the toilet water.



Remove the container from the toilet.



Open the kit.



Wipe the stick through the poo.



Put the stick back into the kit.
Click the lid closed.

Do not reopen the kit.



Tip the poo into the toilet.



Throw the container into a bin.



Wash your hands with soap.



Put your kit into the envelope.



Peel the tape off and stick the envelope down.



You do not need a stamp.



Put the envelope in a post box.

Screening test results

10



You should get a letter within 14 days with your results.



Little or no blood in poo

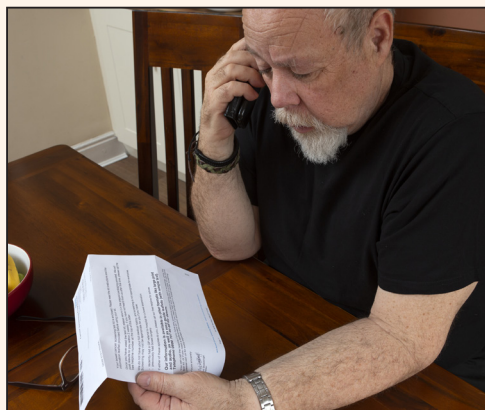
You do not need more tests.



Blood in poo

You may need more tests.

A doctor or nurse will talk to you about your results.



If you have any questions or problems please telephone:
0800 707 60 60.

Keeping your bowel healthy

Having a healthy bowel can help stop cancer.



Eat 5 pieces of fruit and vegetables every day.

Eat food high in fibre. This includes:



- brown bread



- brown rice



- porridge

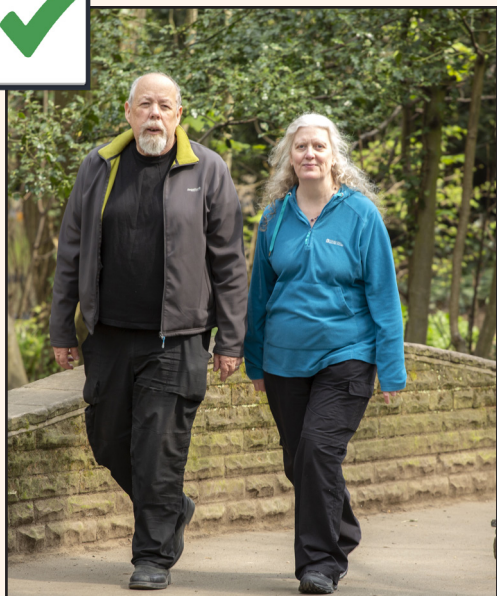
Keeping your bowel healthy



Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water every day.



Be a healthy weight.



Do more exercise.

Some foods are not good for your bowel if you eat **a lot** of them. They include:



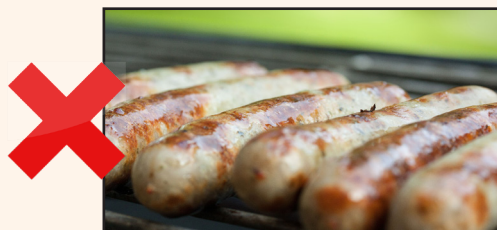
- ham



- bacon



- burgers



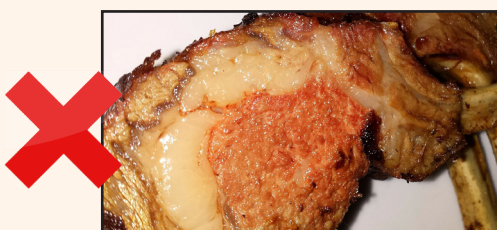
- sausages



- beef



- pork



- lamb



Drinking **a lot** of alcohol is bad for your bowel.



Smoking is bad for your bowel.

When you should go to your doctor

15

You should go to your doctor if:



- you see blood in your poo
- your poo is runny for at least 3 weeks and this is not normal for you



- you stop having a poo and this is not normal for you
- you start to get very bad tummy pains
- you can feel lumps in your tummy



- you lose weight quickly without trying to
- you feel tired **all the time** and this is not normal for you

More information

16

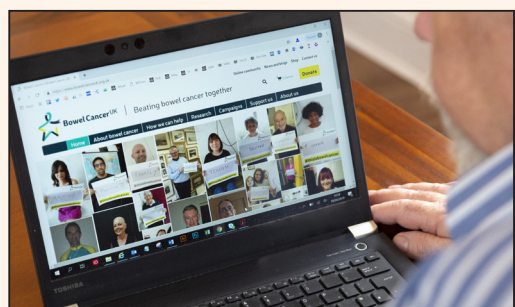
If you have any questions or problems you can:



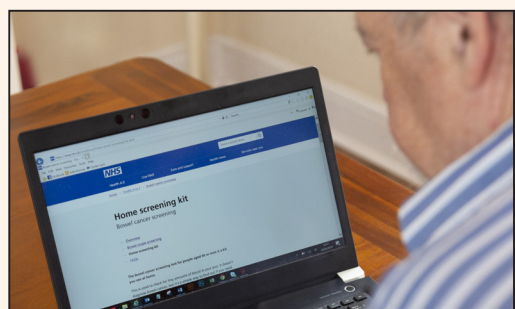
- call **0800 707 60 60**



- book to see your doctor



- visit **www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk**



- visit **www.nhs.uk/bowel**



Bowel Cancer UK
Beating bowel cancer together

With support from Bowel Cancer UK

First published: June 2019

PHE publications gateway number: GW-447

© **Crown copyright 2019**

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the **Open Government Licence v3.0**. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Find out how Public Health England and the NHS use and protect your screening information at **www.gov.uk/phe/screening-data**.

To opt out of screening, see **www.gov.uk/phe/screening-opt-out**.

