

## IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT BOWEL CANCER AND HOME SCREENING.

- Bowel cancer is the third most common cancer in Scotland (after lung cancer and breast cancer). Almost 4,000 people get it every year.
- The older you get the higher your risk of developing bowel cancer. It's more common in people over 50, especially men.
- If it's detected early enough, there's a 9 out of 10 chance of beating it. That's because the sooner it's found the easier it is to treat.
- The whole point of doing the screening test is to find bowel cancer early, even if you've had no obvious symptoms and you feel fine.
- Home screening prevents around 150 deaths every year in Scotland.
- The test picks up most but not every bowel cancer – because it looks for hidden blood and not all cancers bleed.
- Right now, only 55% of Scots who are the right age for the home screening test actually take it.

# BOWEL CANCER. DON'T TAKE A CHANCE. TAKE THE TEST.

If you just want to find out a little bit more about bowel cancer, including its signs and symptoms, go online to [www.nhsinform.co.uk](http://www.nhsinform.co.uk) or call **0800 22 44 88**.

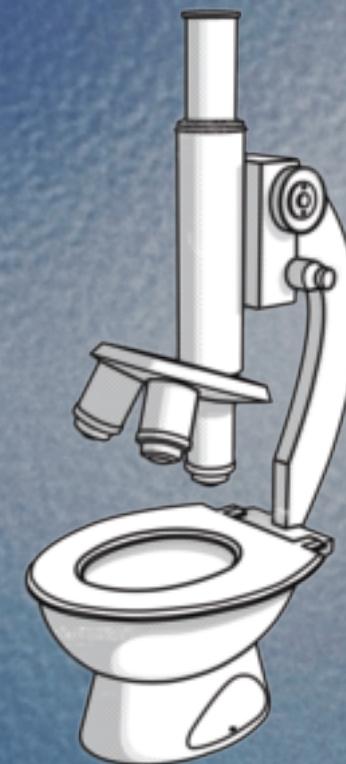
In fact if you have any worries at all, even between screenings, you should make an appointment with your doctor. Your GP wants to hear from you.

If you live in Scotland and you're between 50 and 74 years old – and you haven't completed a bowel screening test in the past two years – you can ask about getting one:

call the helpline  
**0800 0121 833**

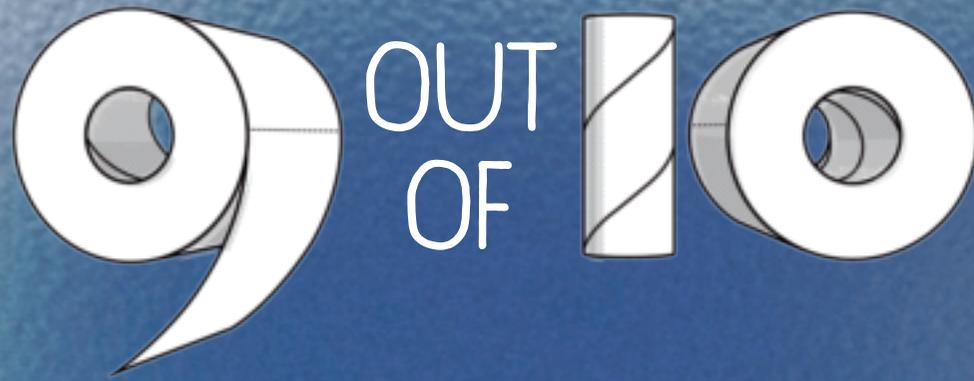
or go online  
[www.bowelscreeningtest.org](http://www.bowelscreeningtest.org)

# THE EARLY SIGNS OF BOWEL CANCER ARE OFTEN HIDDEN.



There's more information about the facts in this leaflet at [www.bowelscreeningtest.org](http://www.bowelscreeningtest.org)





## PEOPLE BEAT BOWEL CANCER WHEN IT'S FOUND EARLY.

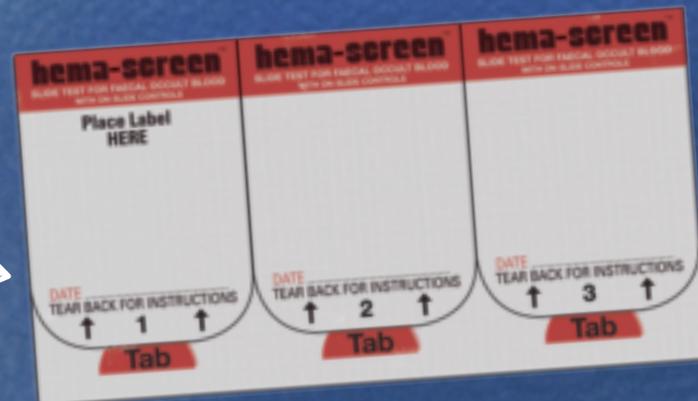
Bowel cancer is the third most common cancer in Scotland. The older you get, the higher your risk of developing it. It's more common in people over 50, especially men. And what lots of people don't know is that the early signs are often hidden. Even your doctor can't see it in its early stages. But when it is found early, bowel cancer's much easier to treat. In fact, 9 out of 10 people beat it. The best way to find it early is to do a home screening test.

## HOME SCREENING CAN FIND BOWEL CANCER EARLY.

The screening test can spot hidden blood in your poo which can often be a sign of bowel cancer – blood you and your doctor wouldn't even know was there unless you did the test. It gets sent to every man and woman in Scotland between 50 and 74, every two years.

So if you're between those two ages and you haven't done a test in the past two years, you can find out how to get your screening kit by calling the helpline or going online.

THE TEST.



## HOME SCREENING COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE.

You don't have to take part in bowel screening. It's your choice. But the NHS in Scotland offers it to everyone between the ages of 50 and 74 to help bring down the number of bowel cancer deaths every year.

Screening can't stop people getting cancer but it does save lives by finding cancer at its earliest stages when there's a better chance of treating it successfully.

Think what you'd say to your best mate, then say it to yourself: *"The test isn't difficult. Three visits to the toilet and you're done."* For some people the whole thing can feel a wee bit embarrassing. But when you think what's at stake, it's well worth just getting on with it.

The bowel cancer screening test is sent to you at home through the post. You do it yourself, in the toilet, in complete privacy.

To take the test, all you have to do is put three small samples of your poo onto a special card, using special sample sticks. It's simple and clean.

When you're done, just pop your card in the post to the Scottish Bowel Screening Centre laboratory for testing. The address is printed on the front of the envelope and it's free and perfectly safe to send.

If you want to find out a bit more about how to do the test, you can go online and watch a short film. But if you have a question, or would like a copy of the film on DVD, just call the helpline. The advisers will be glad to help you and they'll respect your privacy.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS TO LOOK OUT FOR.

Screening won't catch every bowel cancer as not all cancers bleed. It is important to look out for some tell-tale signs and symptoms of bowel cancer, whether or not you do the screening test:

- Repeated bleeding from your bottom or blood in your poo.
- A recent change in your poo that continues for more than six weeks, without going back to normal.
- Watery poo on its own or with constipation (constipation on its own is less likely to be serious).
- Severe pain in your stomach that won't go away, especially after eating.
- You've recently lost weight without trying.
- You feel tired all the time and people keep telling you *"You look a bit pale."*

## DON'T JUST SIT THERE WORRYING.

These symptoms can be caused by a few conditions, not just bowel cancer. But if you've noticed any of them yourself, you need to tell your doctor right away.

Some people are too embarrassed to do this or they think their doctor's too busy. That's just not true. Your GP wants to hear from you. So if you're worried about anything at all, even in between screenings, you should make an appointment as soon as you can. You're not wasting anyone's time and you could be saving your own life or the life of somebody you love.

call the helpline  
**0800 0121 833**

or go online  
**www.bowelscreeningtest.org**