

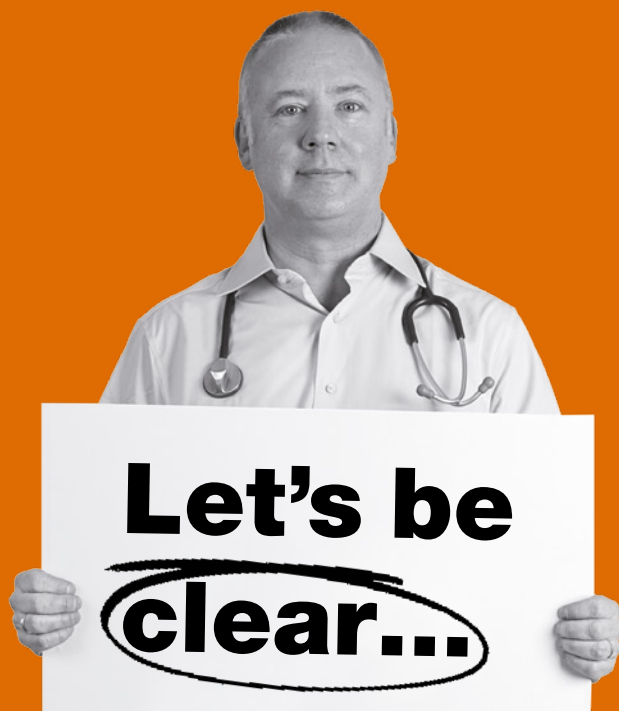


CANCER  
RESEARCH  
UK



Let's be **clear**.  
Bowel cancer  
screening  
saves lives.

**BE CLEAR  
ON CANCER**



Dr Stephen Gaduzo

## ...about bowel cancer screening

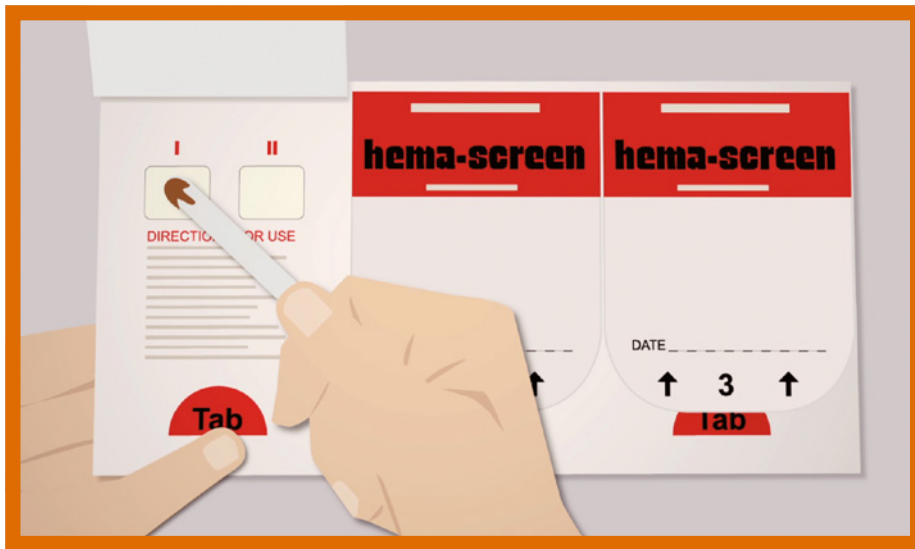
If you are aged 60–74 and registered with a GP in England, you'll be sent a free NHS bowel cancer screening kit in the post, once every two years.

The test may feel a bit embarrassing for some, but it can be completed in the privacy of your own home. It's meant for people with no symptoms and looks for tiny amounts of blood in your poo that you may not be able to see. Bowel cancer screening is a great way to detect cancer at an early stage. When bowel cancer is diagnosed at the earliest stage, more than 9 in 10 people will survive the disease for more than 5 years.

Across the North West, every month more than **26,300** men and women complete and return their bowel cancer screening test. It's your choice whether or not to do the test, so make sure you read the leaflet which is sent with your test kit to help you decide.

# ...about taking the test

The test is simple to complete. It involves going to the toilet three times within a 10-day period and taking a sample of your poo at each visit. Use the cardboard sticks provided to put a sample of your poo onto the test kit. You then need to post your test kit back in the hygienic, prepaid envelope provided. The test kit is safe to send in the post.



The screening kit contains detailed instructions on how to complete the test and tips for collecting your poo. You can also watch a video about how to complete the test at [www.cruk.org/boweltest](http://www.cruk.org/boweltest)

You should get the results of your test back in the post within 2 weeks. If the test finds traces of blood in your poo sample, you'll be offered further tests at the hospital.

If you notice any unusual or persistent changes to your poo or bowel habits, do not wait for your screening kit – see your doctor straight away. To find your doctor's contact details, visit [www.nhs.uk/findgp](http://www.nhs.uk/findgp)

If you have any questions about bowel cancer screening, or you're aged 75 or over and want to request a kit, you can do so by calling the freephone, confidential **NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Helpline on 0800 707 60 60** (Mon–Fri 9.00am–5.00pm).

# ...about how screening can detect cancer **early**



I thought the test would be messy to complete, but it was actually easier than I had expected and I liked that I could do it at home. After finding something abnormal, I was referred for further tests and diagnosed with bowel cancer. It's been 3 years since my diagnosis and I'm now enjoying time with my family. I try to encourage all my friends to do their bowel cancer screening test. I'm so glad I caught it early.

**Paul Hilton, aged 63**



I had no symptoms when I received the bowel cancer screening test, but when I saw it was from the NHS, I thought it was important to do. I was a bit shocked when I was diagnosed, but thankfully my cancer was found early. I had surgery a month later and needed no further treatment. I'm still living life to the full.

**Carol Ratcliffe, aged 71**

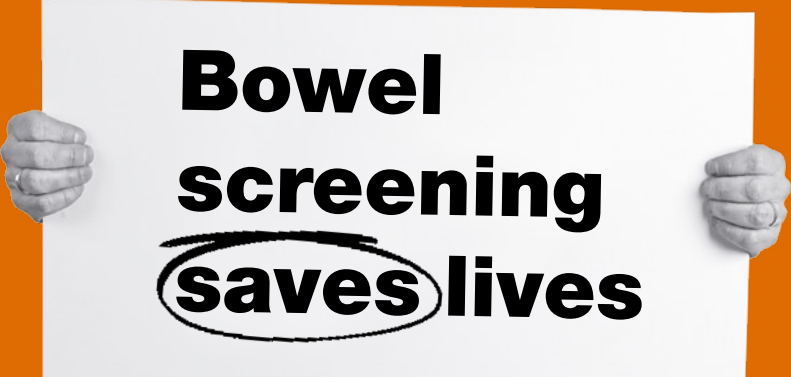
## ...about **bowel cancer**

Bowel cancer (also called colorectal cancer) is the 4th most common type of cancer diagnosed in the UK. It affects both men and women, and the risk increases with age. More than 9 in 10 people who are diagnosed with bowel cancer in England are aged 55 or over.

## ...about another type of bowel cancer screening (**bowel scope**)

Bowel scope is a one-off screening test offered to 55 year olds. It is gradually being introduced across England, so it may not be fully available in your area yet. The test uses a small tube with a tiny camera on the end to look at the large bowel. It can find and remove small growths (polyps) from the bowel which can reduce the risk of bowel cancer developing in the future. Bowel scope can also help spot bowel cancer at an early stage.

People who are invited to have bowel scope at age 55 will still receive a free NHS bowel cancer screening test in the post to complete at home, once every two years from age 60 to 74.



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screening  
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# ...about **reducing** your risk of cancer

Around 300,000 people are diagnosed with cancer in England each year, but more than 4 in 10 cases could be prevented through things such as:

## **Not smoking**

Smoking increases the risk of many cancers. If you smoke, the best thing you can do for your health is to quit. There's plenty of free support and help available from the NHS. **Visit [www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree) or call 0300 123 1044.**

## **Look after yourself**

Being overweight or obese can increase your risk of some cancers. Try to maintain a healthy weight and keep active. Swimming, cycling, dancing, walking – the more you can do, the better. Try to eat a healthy, balanced diet too, with plenty of fruit and vegetables.

## **Cut down on alcohol**

Drinking alcohol is known to increase your risk of some cancers. The more you drink the greater your risk. There is no safe drinking level. By cutting down on alcohol you'll reduce the risks to your health.

## **More information**

For more information on how to reduce your risk of cancer visit **[www.nhs.uk/reduce-your-risk](http://www.nhs.uk/reduce-your-risk)**

**Unclear on anything?**

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