



Public Health  
England



# Bowel scope screening

An **easy guide**



Men and women are invited for bowel scope screening when they reach age 55.

Call the Freephone helpline for advice: **0800 707 60 60**

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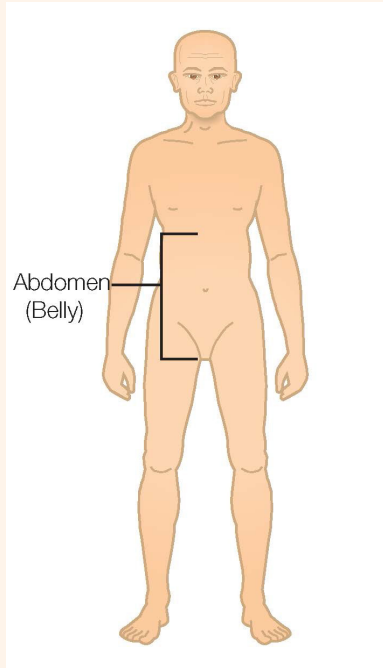


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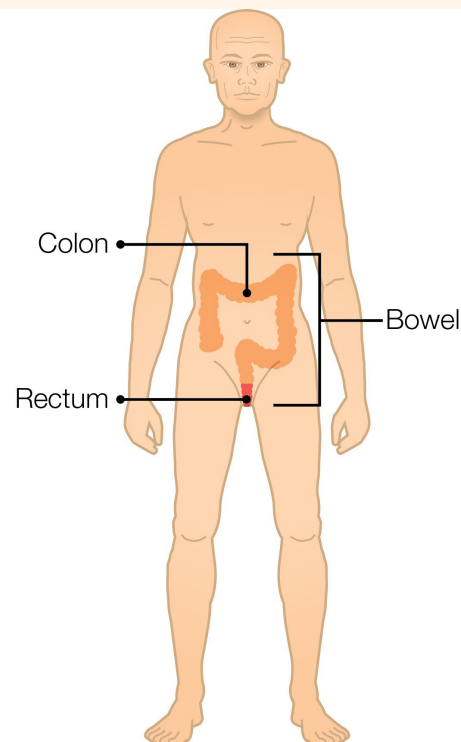
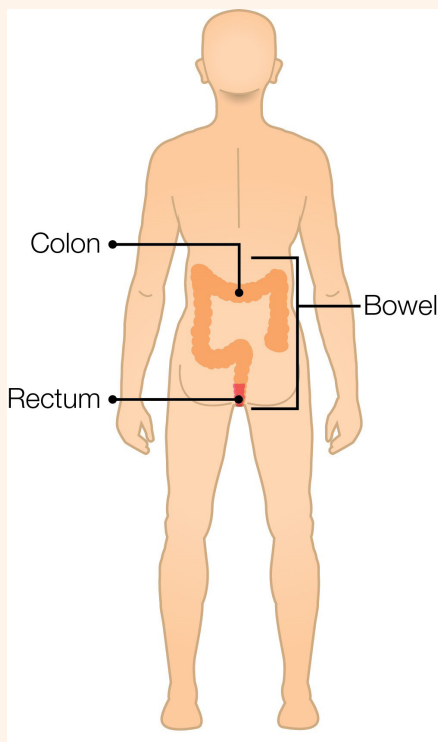
# Your choice



This booklet is about bowel scope screening.

Your bowel is in your abdomen (belly).

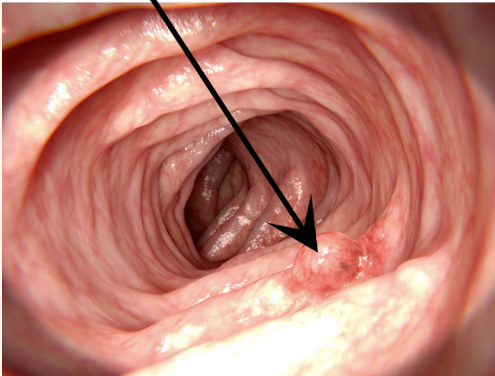
Your poo is made in the bowel. Poo is all of the solid waste from your body.



Your bowel is made up of different parts.

Bowel scope screening looks at the colon and rectum.

Small lump (polyp)



The test can find small lumps called polyps inside your bowel.

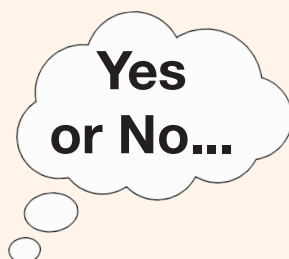
These lumps can grow and become cancer.

If we find and remove lumps early you are less likely to get bowel cancer.



You can talk to someone you feel comfortable with to help you think about the test.

You can talk to a nurse, carer, support worker or your GP.



You can choose if you want to have the test or not.



You can have the test until you reach the age of 60.

You can call the freephone number **0800 707 60 60** to book an appointment.

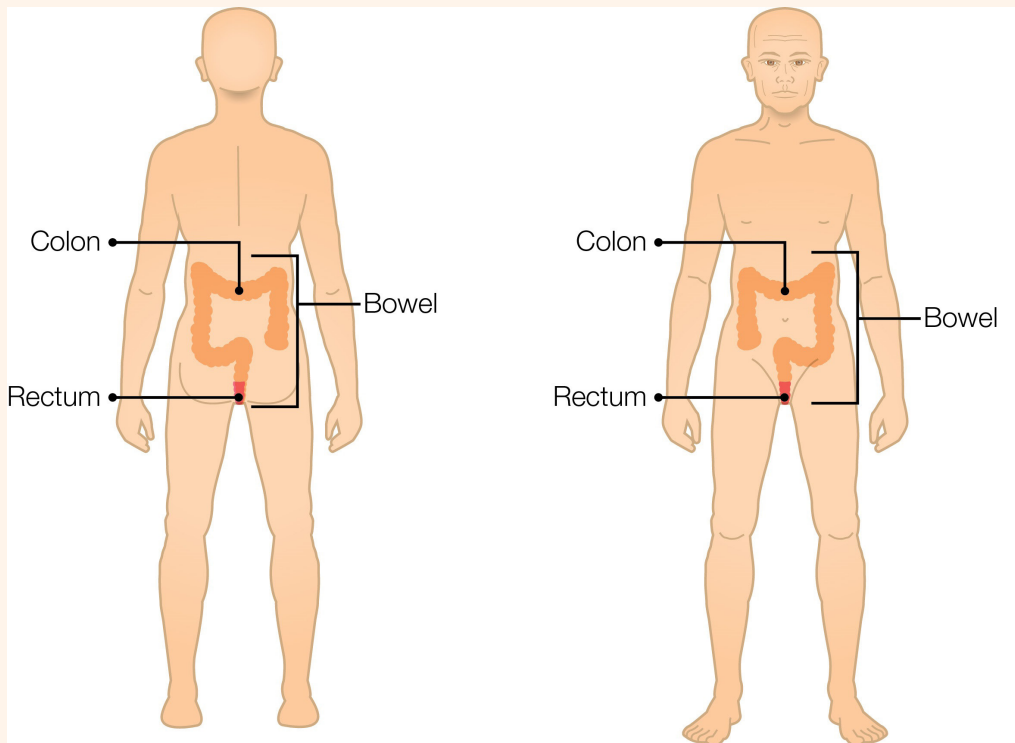


# Bowel cancer



Cancer is a very serious illness that you can die from.

Bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer.



Bowel cancer is a disease that some people get in their bowel.

It is also called colorectal cancer.



## Getting your invitation

You will receive an invitation (letter) to take part in bowel scope screening.



It may help to read this letter with a carer or someone who knows you well.

Call the freephone helpline **0800 707 60 60** if you have a disability or need extra support.

You will receive a second letter within 2 weeks.



It will tell you the time, date and name of the hospital you will need to attend.

Write the time and date on your calendar.

At the bottom of the letter is a form.



You need to complete the form to say if you want to take part in bowel scope screening.

You can ask someone to help you with this.



Put the form into the envelope and post it.





## Before the test



We will send you a letter and bag of liquid 2 weeks before your appointment.

The bag of liquid is called an enema.



The liquid is used to clear poo out of your bowel so that the nurse or doctor can see inside your bowel.

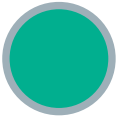
You will be given instructions on how to put this liquid into your bottom.



You need to use the enema on the day of your test. You can complete the enema at home.

If you need help, you or your carer can arrange to have the enema at the NHS bowel cancer screening centre.

You can call **0800 707 60 60** to arrange this.



## On the day of the test



Make sure you attend the NHS bowel cancer screening centre on the right day and time.

It might help to bring a friend or a carer.



The receptionist will give you a health form to fill in. You will need to know what medication you are on.

Your friend, carer or nurse can help you complete the form.



A nurse or a health professional will call your name.

The nurse or health professional will stay with you during your appointment.

They will take you to a room to talk to you.



The nurse or health professional will explain what will happen, answer any questions and listen to any concerns.



The nurse or health professional may check your blood pressure.



The nurse or health professional may put a small machine on your finger.

This will measure the oxygen in your blood.

It will not hurt.



The nurse or health professional will put a wristband on you. This will have your name and date of birth on it.



The nurse or health professional will take you to a changing room.

They will ask you to put on a hospital gown.

You will need to take off your pants and trousers or skirt.

If you have asked for help with the enema then the nurse will explain the process to you and help you do the enema.



The nurse or health professional will take you to the test room.

This is where the bowel scope screening test will happen.

There will be other nurses or doctors in the room.



You will be asked to lie on your left side.

The nurse or health professional will move your gown so the doctor can see your bottom.

Nobody else will see your bottom.



Bowel scope screening uses a thin, bendy tube with a small camera on the end.

It can show the doctor the inside of your bowel.



The doctor will place this tube into your bottom. This may feel uncomfortable.

Most people don't find this painful.



The doctor will gently pump some air inside your bottom.

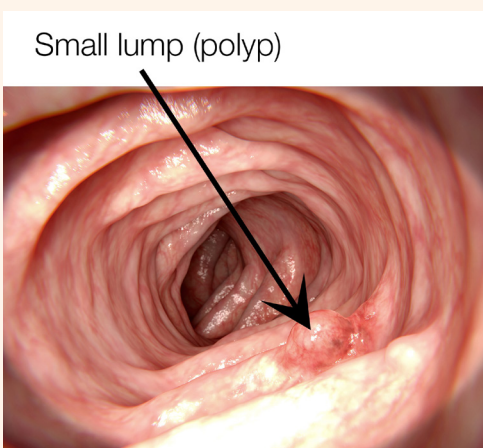
This helps the nurse or doctor to see inside your bowel.

You may feel that you need to pass wind (fart).



The doctor will see the inside of your bowel on a computer screen.

You can also see the screen if you want.



If they find any small lumps (polyps), they will usually remove them during the test.

This does not usually hurt.



When the test is finished the doctor will remove the tube from your bottom.

The doctor will talk to you about your results.



The nurse or health professional will walk you back to the changing room.

You can now put your clothes back on.



It is normal to feel bloated or full after the test.

Sometimes there is bleeding from the bottom after the test. This does not happen very often.

If you are worried about anything you should speak to your carer or nurse.



## Test results

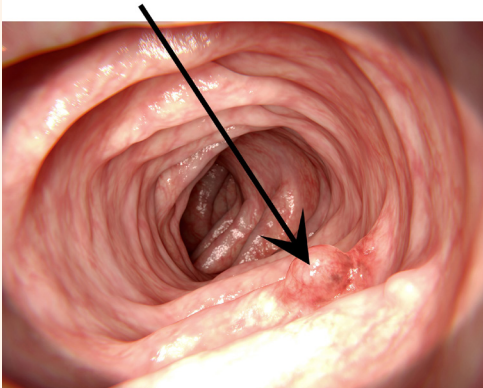


After the test you will be given a letter. This will show your results.

Most people will have a normal result.

You can ask the nurse any questions.

Small lump (polyp)



Some people will have small lumps (polyps).

The nurse or doctor will tell you if they have removed any small lumps (polyps).

If you have a lot of these then you may need another appointment.



There is a small chance that the nurse or doctor will find bowel cancer.

If they find bowel cancer they will arrange for you to see a special doctor as soon as possible.





## How to stay healthy

**You can reduce your chances of getting bowel cancer by following these steps.**



Eat less processed meats and red meat. Processed meats, such as bacon and sausages, have added salt.



Eat plenty of fibre, for example, vegetables and wholegrain food.



Be a healthy weight.



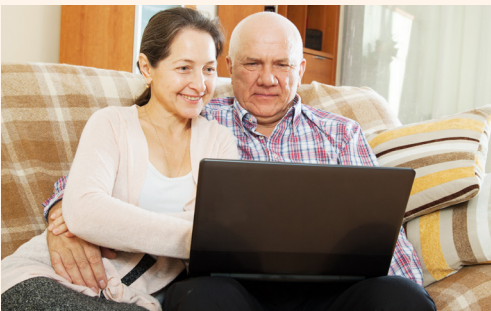
## More information



You can call the freephone number:  
**0800 707 60 60.**



You can talk to your GP.



You can visit NHS Choices at:  
**[www.nhs.uk/bowel](http://www.nhs.uk/bowel)**

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Public Health England leads the NHS Screening Programmes