

KEY THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT FIT



England

The **Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)** is a type of faecal occult blood test used to detect traces of human blood in stool samples. FIT can be used:

- as the primary test in the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme (BCSP), aimed at individuals without symptoms (**phased screening implementation due to start late 2018**).
- as a test to guide the management of individuals who present with symptoms (**symptomatic**)

There are **significant differences** between each use of FIT which are important for health professionals to be aware of. This includes the threshold for all abnormal results; e.g, a patient might test normal following screening, yet receive an abnormal result, requiring further action, when tested symptomatically.

SCREENING

1. FIT will automatically be offered to people who meet the eligible age criterion*
2. The kit is sent to eligible individuals in the post
3. The completed kit is returned by post to the screening hub
4. The threshold for determining an abnormal result is high
5. GPs are informed of all results (normal/abnormal) and can receive these electronically
- 6a. Those with an abnormal result are invited to a colonoscopy pre-assessment appointment
- b. Those with a normal result will be eligible for future screening every two years
- c. If the screening test is normal yet colorectal symptoms develop, GPs should consider the FIT symptomatic pathway

SYMPTOMATIC

1. FIT is offered to people who have certain symptoms (NICE DG30 criteria)
2. The kit is given out by the GP, or sent to the patient by the lab once a GP has requested a kit
3. The completed kit is returned to the GP or directly to the lab
4. The threshold for determining an abnormal result is low
5. GPs will be given a result (normal/abnormal) and this may also include a numeric value
- 6a. Those with an abnormal result are not automatically referred – GPs need to send them on a 2WW
- b. Those with a normal result may still warrant routine referral or further investigation
- c. Those with a normal result may still have cancer – primary care clinicians should be vigilant for ongoing, changing or worsening symptoms

*In England the BCSP currently invites all people between the ages of 60-74 years every two years

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