

Quantitative faecal immunochemical testing to guide colorectal cancer pathway referral in primary care

Information for the public

Published: 24 August 2023

www.nice.org.uk

NICE has said that quantitative faecal immunochemical testing (FIT) with HM-JACKarc or OC-Sensor can be used in primary care to help identify who should be referred for suspected colorectal (bowel) cancer. You should be offered FIT if you:

- have an abdominal mass (lump in your tummy), change in bowel habit (such as looser poo, pooing more often or constipation) or iron-deficiency anaemia
- are aged 40 and over and have unexplained weight loss and abdominal (tummy) pain
- are aged under 50 and have rectal bleeding (bleeding from your bottom) and any of the following unexplained symptoms:
 - tummy pain
 - weight loss
- are aged 50 and over and have any of the following unexplained symptoms:
 - bleeding from your bottom
 - tummy pain
 - weight loss
- are aged 60 and over with anaemia but you do not have iron deficiency.

FIT detects small amounts of blood in faeces (poo), which can be a sign of colorectal cancer. FIT results can help GPs (primary care) identify who should be referred for further tests. This means that people who need further tests can be seen more quickly and people who are less likely to have colorectal cancer can avoid unnecessary tests.

You should be offered FIT even if you have previously given a sample as part of the [NHS bowel cancer screening programme](#). You should let your GP know if you need more information on FIT or support to return your sample. If your FIT result is positive, your GP should refer you for further tests to find out the cause of the bleeding.

Is this test right for me?

Your healthcare professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. Your family can be involved too, if you wish. Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Questions to think about

- How well does it work compared with other tests?
- What happens if I do not want to have the test?
- How long will the test take?
- How do I get my test results? Will there be a follow-up appointment?

Information and support

The [NHS website on bowel cancer](#) may be a good place to find out more.

- [Bowel Cancer UK](#), 020 7940 1760
- [Crohn's & Colitis UK](#), 0300 222 5700

You can also get support from your local [Healthwatch](#).

NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

ISBN: 978-1-4731-7418-4