

# Key things to know about FIT

## in Northern Ireland



The Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) is a type of faecal occult blood test used to detect traces of human blood in stool samples. It's used in bowel cancer screening and to assess patients with potential or suspected colorectal cancer symptoms.

Together we are  
beating cancer

### Screening pathway

- FIT is used as the primary test in the Northern Ireland Bowel Cancer Screening Programme (NI BCSP), aimed at people without symptoms.
- It's automatically offered every two years to people aged 60–74 years who are registered with a GP.
- The threshold for determining a positive result is set at 120 µg Hb/g faeces.

- The kit is sent to eligible individuals by post.
- A replacement kit can be ordered via the Bowel Cancer Screening helpline on 0800 015 2514.
- People complete and return their kit by freepost to the laboratory.
- Results are sent to GPs electronically, and to patients by post. Screening indicates where further investigations are needed (without quantitative values).
- People with a positive result are invited for further investigation (usually colonoscopy).
- **Or**
- People with a negative result continue to be eligible for screening every two years until the age of 74.

### Symptomatic pathway

- FIT supports assessment in primary care to help manage patients who present symptomatically.
- The threshold for determining a positive result (normally 7 µg Hb/g faeces) is significantly lower than the NI BCSP threshold.

- FIT is offered to people who present with symptoms.
- The kit is given out by the GP practice. Order more kits or leaflets via [FPS eBusiness](#).
- The patient completes and returns their kit to the GP practice.
- GPs will be informed of all results electronically.
- GPs should follow national guidance for referring patients with a positive result.\*
- **Or**
- Patients with a negative result may still warrant referral or further investigation.



**Patients should not be discharged based on a FIT result alone. Make sure to safety net patients until symptoms are explained or resolved.**



For further information visit [cruk.org/bowelscreeninghub](https://cruk.org/bowelscreeninghub) and [cruk.org/FITsymptomatic](https://cruk.org/FITsymptomatic)

\*According to the [NICaN Lower GI Suspected Cancer Pathway](#)



**If a patient develops symptoms at any stage they should contact their GP practice for further assessment regardless of screening results.**



Further information on the NI BCSP is available via the freephone helpline **0800 015 2514** or at [nidirect.gov.uk/bowel-screening](https://nidirect.gov.uk/bowel-screening)

