

Key things to know about FIT for Health Professionals






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
- 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 still receive an abnormal result, requiring further action, when they present to their GP because they are experiencing abdominal symptoms.




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 an abnormal result is set at $>120\mu\text{gHb/g}$ faeces
-  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 a 2ww referral or FIT symptomatic pathway

SYMPTOMATIC

-  1. FIT can be offered to people who have certain symptoms: NICE DG30 criteria**
-  2. The kit is given out by the GP. Patients must follow the instructions to collect their stool sample
-  3. The completed kit is returned to the GP, who returns it to the lab
-  4. The threshold for an abnormal result is $\geq 10\mu\text{gHb/g}$ faeces
-  5. GPs will be given the result electronically and this may include a numeric value.

-  **6a.** Those with an abnormal result are not automatically referred – GPs need to refer on a 2ww pathway
-  **b.** Those with a negative result may still warrant further investigation. There may be a non-cancer cause for their symptoms
-  **c.** FIT is a very sensitive test to be used in conjunction with clinical assessment and examination but if symptoms progress, reassess the patient and consider 2ww referral

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

** Refer to <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/dg30>

Acknowledgment. We thank Cancer Research UK for their help and support in producing this leaflet.