

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 is used:

- as the primary test in the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme (BCSP), aimed at individuals without symptoms (**screening**).
- 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 positive results; e.g, a patient might test negative following screening, yet receive a positive result, requiring further action, when tested symptomatically.

Screening



1. FIT is currently offered to people aged 60-74 years*



2. The kit is sent to eligible individuals in the post



3. The completed kit is returned by post to the screening hub



120µg/g

4. The threshold for determining a positive result is set at 120µg Hb/g faeces



5. GPs are informed of all results and receive these electronically



6a. Those with a positive result are invited for further tests, normally colonoscopy



2 years

b. Those with a negative result continue to be eligible for screening every two years



c. If the screening test is negative yet symptoms develop, GPs should consider the FIT symptomatic pathway or 2ww pathway

Symptomatic



1. FIT is offered to people who present with symptoms**



2. The kit is given out by the GP, or sent to the patient by the lab on GP request



3. The patient returns the completed test normally to their GP practice or directly to the nominated lab***



4. The threshold for determining a positive result is lower than BCSP (normally 10µg Hb/g faeces)



5. GPs will be given a result and this may also include a numeric value



2ww

6a. Those with a positive result are not automatically referred – GPs need to send them on a 2ww



b. Those with a negative result may still warrant routine referral or further investigation



c. A negative result does not exclude cancer – GPs should safety-net for ongoing, changing or worsening symptoms

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

** According to NICE guidelines (www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng12)

*** Check local pathways

September 2019

