

What is cancer screening?

Screening a test is given to **healthy people**, in order to detect cancer at a very early stage.

Screening is not the same as the tests a person may have when doctors are diagnosing or treating cancer. If you have any symptoms that worry you, book in to see your GP urgently.

It is important to realize that when cancer is detected early through screening, the treatment can be very effective, and lives can be saved from cancer.

There are however some people who have a false positive screening result, and as such harm may be done with follow-up tests and treatment that may not have benefited them.

Also, there is a danger of over-diagnosis of small cancers, which may not have harmed a patient if they were not picked up.

Our recommendation is for patients to attend their screening appointments, but we have put this guide together to make sure you are all fully informed of the pros and the cons of screening, to help you decide.

If you are unsure what to do...

Come and speak to our GPs or nurses who can explain the risks and benefits of screening in more detail and help you make an informed choice.

Further information is also available at:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Screening>

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/screening>

www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk

**IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT
SYMPTOMS THAT MIGHT BE
CANCER:**

SEE YOUR GP URGENTLY

Porters Avenue G.P. Practice



**Cancer Screening:
A guide for patients**

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Bowel, breast, and cervical cancer:
What do I need to know?

Bowel Cancer Screening

Remember, bowel screening is for **HEALTHY** people. If you have any **BLEEDING** from the bottom, or **LOOSE STOOLS** for more than **6 WEEKS**, or any other symptoms that worry you – **SPEAK TO YOUR GP URGENTLY**



The test for bowel cancer is a stool (poo) sample. Barking & Dagenham CCG is currently engaging in a new method that only requires a single stool sample.

Early results of this new test suggest that for every 1000 healthy people tested, 18 will have an abnormal result. Of these, only 1 person will have an early bowel cancer.

A colonoscopy is a narrow tube camera that is passed through your bottom into your bowel. This is done if you have a positive stool result.

The stool sample is very easy to do, as the picture above demonstrates.

If you would like to request a pack, please phone the bowel cancer screening helpline on 0800707 6060

You usually get the results of your tests 2 weeks later. Most people have a normal result. This doesn't completely rule out cancer. So, it is important to get to know your body and what is normal for you. See your GP if you have any unusual changes that don't go away.

Who is eligible for NHS cancer screening?

Men and women in England are offered a **bowel cancer test** every two years from the age of **60 to 74 years**. As long as you're registered with us and we have your current home address, you should automatically be sent the home test kit by post.

Similarly, breast cancer screening invitations are automatically sent to **women aged 50-70 years**, every 3 years.

Cervical screening is different, because **our nurses perform this in our surgery**. You should book for this every **3 years if you are aged 25-49 years**, and **every 5 years if you are aged 50-64 years**. The test is done from **day 8 to 14 of your menstrual cycle** (i.e. when you are not bleeding).

Breast Cancer Screening

The test for breast cancer is a mammogram (x-ray), for which you will be automatically recalled.

You can phone HUB Breast Screening Service on 0203 758 2024 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm for appointments and information.

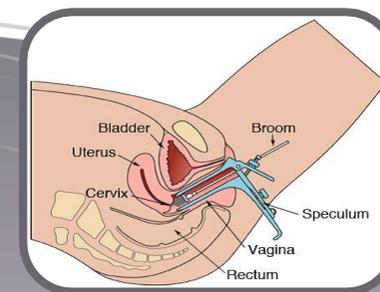
Following a mammogram, around 5 out of 100 women will be called back for a further assessment, which may include a needle biopsy. 4 of these 5 women will have a normal result from this follow-up.

Overall, the breast-screening programme finds cancer in about 8 out of every 1000 healthy women having screening.

Women who are diagnosed with breast cancer at the earliest possible stage have a 9 in 10 chance (90%) of surviving at least 5 years after diagnosis.

There are 15,500 breast cancers diagnosed through screening in the UK each year. Of these, 4000 will be over-diagnoses (that is, small cancers that are then treated but were unlikely to have ever caused harm).

1300 lives are saved from breast cancer in the UK each year. This means that for every life saved from breast cancer by screening, around 3 are over-diagnosed.



Cervical Cancer Screening

The cervical screening test usually takes around five minutes to carry out. You'll be asked to undress from the waist down and lie on a couch, although you can usually remain fully dressed if you're wearing a loose skirt.

The doctor or nurse will gently put an instrument, called a speculum, into your vagina. This holds the walls of the vagina open so the cervix can be seen. A small soft brush will be used to gently collect some cells from the surface of your cervix.

It takes about 5 minutes, and our nurses will try and make you feel relaxed.

If the cervical test result is abnormal, you will be offered colposcopy (an vaginal examination with a camera) at Hospital.