

Key things to know about FIT



Wales

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 Screening Wales (BSW) programme, 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. A replacement kit can be ordered from BSW on 0800 294 3370



4. The completed kit is returned by post to the screening centre



5. The threshold for determining a positive result is set at 150µgHb/g faeces



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



7a. Those with a positive result are invited for further tests, normally colonoscopy



b. Those who receive a negative result continue to be eligible for screening every 2 years



c. If the screening test is negative yet symptoms develop, GPs should consider the FIT symptomatic or single cancer 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. Refer to local guidance on how to order a replacement kit



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



5. The threshold for determining a positive result is lower than BSW (normally 10 µg/Hb/g)



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



7a. GPs should follow the locally developed pathway for referring patients with a positive result



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

* BSW currently invites all people between the ages of 60-74 every two years.

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

*** Check local pathways

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