

Does the Flexi-sig Test protect me against bowel cancer?

As with all screening, a normal Flexi-sig test does not mean you definitely do not have, or will never develop bowel cancer.

Are there any risks?

The test is very safe and has been routinely used in hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. There may be a small amount of bleeding after removal of a polyp. The risk of any damage (e.g. a tear in the bowel) is very small (1 in 5,000). You may experience abdominal bloating which is usually gone by the following day.

Who should not have the test?

If you have been invited for the test you are advised to attend the pre-screening appointment with the nurse however if you have had one of the following please call us on 707740 in advance as you may be exempt:

- Bowel cancer
- Any inflammatory bowel disease
- Kidney failure (on dialysis)
- Artificial heart valve
- Recent heart attack (last 6 months)
- Awaiting heart surgery or coronary angioplasty
- Any other serious illness

FAQ



Q. What happens if I am unsure or unable to keep my appointment?

A. If you contact us, we are happy to rearrange or suspend appointments up to a maximum of three times within 12 months. After this you will be discharged from the programme.

A. If you do not contact us, we will write to your GP to advise that you missed your appointment and they will contact you. If you then wish to attend we will be able to offer just one more appointment before discharging you from the programme.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to telephone the bowel screening office on 707740 during normal office hours.

Guernsey Bowel Cancer Screening Programme

Preventing bowel cancer could save your life

The Flexible Sigmoidoscopy (Flexi-sig) Test can help prevent bowel cancer

Why do I need bowel cancer screening?

- One in 20 people develop bowel cancer in their lifetime and half of them die from it.
- Bowel cancer is the third most common cause of death from cancer, after lung cancer and prostate cancer.
- If you are aged 60 or over you are most at risk of bowel cancer.
- Both men and women are at risk.
- Bowel cancer often has no symptoms until the later stages, when it is more difficult to treat.
- Most people who get bowel cancer do not have a family history of the disease.
- By going for screening you will be taking an opportunity to reduce your risk.



Every year, lives can be saved because people attend screening.

What is the Flexible Sigmoidoscopy (Flexi-sig) Test?

It is a test used to screen healthy people. It examines the bowel for polyps and early cancer. Polyps are small lumps that grow in the bowel lining.

I feel well, why have the test?

- About one in three people have polyps.
- You cannot tell if you have polyps because there are often no symptoms.
- Polyps are harmless in most cases but sometimes they can grow and turn into cancer.
- The Flexi-sig test enables painless removal of any polyps so they can't turn into cancer.

What does the test involve?

1. Pre-Screening Appointment (approximately 15 minutes)

The bowel screening nurse will explain the Flexi-sig test and answer any questions you may have. You will then be able to decide if you would like to have the test.

Should you decide to have the test the Bowel Cancer Screening administrator will make the appointment with you before you leave.

2. The Flexi-sig Test

The test will take 15 minutes although you should allow longer (approximately 45 minutes) for the whole appointment. A specialist will examine your bowel with a thin, flexible tube with a light & camera at the end and remove any small polyps.

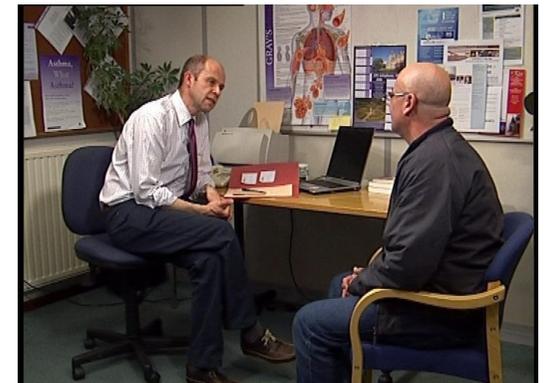
What happens if the test is abnormal?

Most polyps found during screening can be removed quickly and painlessly on the spot.

If you are one of the few people with a large or numerous polyps, you may be offered another test to remove them and to make sure you have no more.

Immediately after the test the doctor will inform you of the results of the examination. You can then have a drink and go home.

Any samples taken will be tested and within 3 weeks you and your GP will receive a letter explaining the results. Very rarely, a cancer is found. You are more likely to be cured if bowel cancer is detected at screening rather than if it is detected because symptoms have developed.



How effective is the test?

The test has been shown to reduce bowel cancers and bowel cancer deaths through a combination of bowel cancer prevention and early detection.