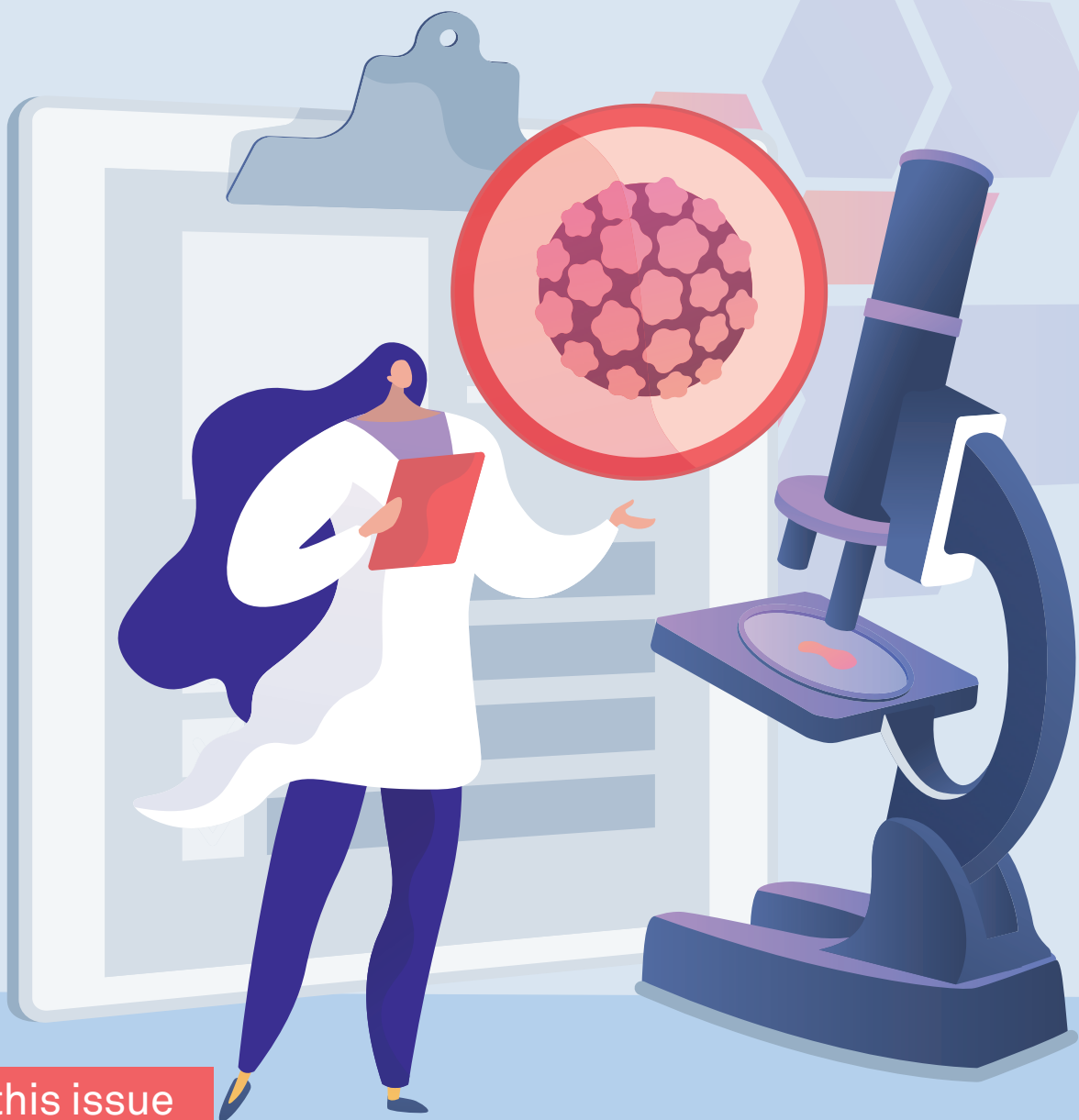


Your Health



Health Partners Newsletter October 2021



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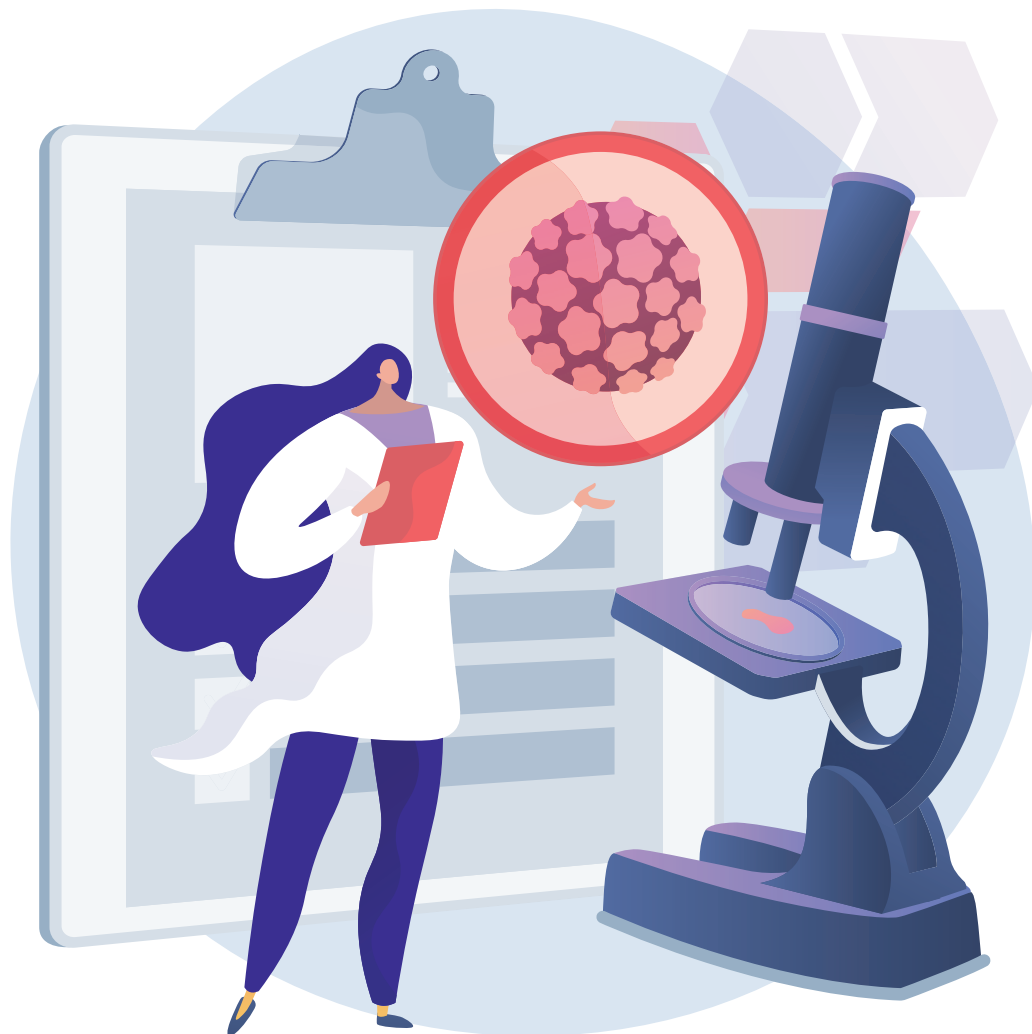


Cancer Screening

Cancer screening is used to try to identify those at higher risk of cancer, so steps can be taken to reduce their risk or provide medical intervention.

In the UK we routinely screen for three types of cancer. Cancer screening aims to detect cancer early, thereby maximising the chances of successful treatment and recovery:

- Bowel cancer
- Breast cancer
- Cervical cancer.



The NHS bowel cancer screening programme

The programme offers screening every two years to all men and women aged 60 to 74.

Those registered with a GP will be sent a screening kit. People older than this can ask for a screening kit every two years, by calling the free helpline on 0800 707 6060. Other points:

- People in the invitation age range are automatically sent an invitation, then a bowel screening kit, so they can do the test at home
- After the first screening test, they will be sent another invitation and screening kit every two years until they reach 74
- An abnormal result (positive test for blood in the poo) will mean the patient will be offered colonoscopy (examination of the large bowel using a fibre-optic camera).

An important objective of the screening programme is to make sure those invited attend. The expected effectiveness of the bowel screening programme in reducing bowel cancer mortality requires a minimum uptake of 52%.

Find out more information about bowel cancer screening:

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/awareness-and-prevention/be-clear-on-cancer>

If your GP suspects you may have bowel cancer, they will arrange for you to see a specialist. Depending on your symptoms and other factors, this may be an urgent referral. With an urgent referral, you should see a specialist within two weeks.

To learn more about bowel cancer:

<https://www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-cancer/>

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/bowel-cancer>

Northern Ireland

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/bowel-cancer-screening>

Scotland: <http://www.healthscotland.scot/health-topics/screening/bowel-screening#:~:text=Scotland%20has%20a%20higher%20rate%20of%20bowel%20cancer,onwards%20the%20risk%20of%20bowel%20cancer%20is%20higher.>

Wales: <https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/screening/bowel-screening/>

NHS breast cancer screening programme

The UK's programme was launched in 1987 based on the recommendations of the Forrester Committee, in an attempt to detect early, non-palpable (cannot be felt), local disease.

The programme's goals are:

- To invite three-yearly, all women in the 50-70 year age group for mammography in static or mobile units, with the option of self-referral for older women
- To recall all women with mammographically detected abnormalities for further investigation in specialist assessment units.

In women over 50 years of age (as risk increases with age), mammographic screening has been shown to reduce the mortality from breast cancer by at least 25%. Women over the age of 70 are also entitled to screening and can arrange an appointment through their GP or local screening unit. The NHS is in the process of extending the programme as a trial, offering screening to some women aged 47 to 73.

After ten years, the UK screening programme is expected to produce a reduction of 1,250 breast cancer deaths annually, with each woman in whom death from breast cancer is prevented, surviving, on average, an extra 20 years.

Mammographic screening, where x-ray images of the breast are taken, is the most commonly available way of finding a change in your breast tissue at an early stage. However, you should be aware that a mammogram may fail to detect some breast cancers.

Women with a higher than average risk of developing breast cancer may be offered screening and genetic testing for the condition.

Find out more about breast cancer, including different types, treatment, and living with breast cancer:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/breast-cancer/>

<https://breastcancer.org/>

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/breast-cancer>

<https://breastcancer.org/information-support/have-i-got-breast-cancer/signs-symptoms-breast-cancer>

Northern Ireland:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/search?query=breast+cancer>

Scotland: <http://www.healthscotland.scot/health-topics/screening/breast-screening>

Wales: <https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/screening/breast-screening/about-breast-screening/>



NHS cervical screening programme

Cervical cancer is cancer in the cervix, the opening of the womb from the vagina.

It is possible for anyone with a cervix (women, trans men, people who are non-binary who were assigned female at birth, and cis gender women) of any age to develop cervical cancer.

Almost all cases of cervical cancer are caused by human papilloma virus (HPV). This is a very common virus, which can be passed on through any type of sexual contact, with a man* or a woman.* There are more than a hundred types of HPV, many of which are harmless. However, some types can cause abnormal changes to the cells of the cervix, which can eventually lead to cervical cancer. There is a huge move to HPV screening for cervical cancer as cervical cancer is highly unlikely where HPV is not detected. This means that no additional screening should be needed where negative and the test is generally more comfortable.

Other risk factors for cervical cancer include other sexually transmitted infections, smoking, the contraceptive pill, how many children you have had and when you have had them, family history and certain previous cancers.

The best way to protect yourself from cervical cancer is by attending your cervical screening appointment (previously known as a “smear test”).

The screening program in the UK:

- Aims to reduce the incidence of and mortality from cervical cancer through a screening programme for people aged 24.5 to 64 who have a cervix
- Individuals are invited for their first screening test at the age of 24.5 years. Individuals under this age who have symptoms, are concerned about their sexual health or are worried about their risk of developing cervical cancer, should contact their GP or their local genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinic
- Between the ages of 24.5 to 49, individuals are offered cervical screening every three years
- Between the ages of 50 and 64, individuals are offered cervical screening every five years.

Cervical screening checks the health of your cervix. It is not a test for cancer; it is a test to help prevent cancer. In the test, cells are collected, put onto a slide and the cells are then analysed carefully in a laboratory for signs of pre cancer/changes, etc.

You should be sent a letter confirming when it is your time for your screening appointment. Contact your GP if you think that you may be overdue.

During cervical screening, a small sample of cells is taken from a cervix and checked under a microscope for abnormalities.

In some areas, the screening sample is first checked for human papilloma virus (HPV).

An abnormal cervical screening test result does not mean you have cancer. Most abnormal results are either due to signs of HPV, the presence of treatable precancerous cells, or both, rather than cancer itself.

You will get the results by letter, usually in about two to six weeks. The letter will explain what happens next.

Find out more about cervical cancer:

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cervical-cancer>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-cancer/>

Scotland: <http://www.healthscotland.scot/health-topics/screening/cervical-screening>

Northern Ireland:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/conditions/cervical-cancer>

Wales: <https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/cervical-screening-wales/what-is-cervical-screening/>

*Includes men, women, trans men, trans women, people who are non-binary who were assigned female or male at birth, and cis gender women or men.



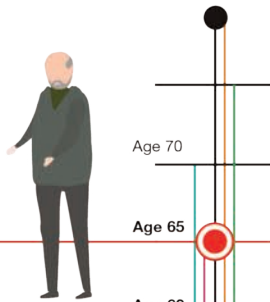
Population Screening Timeline

These apply in England. Check the NHS/health service in your nation to see if these ranges apply to you.

Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening

Offered to **men** during the **year they turn 65**. Older men can self-refer.

www.nhs.uk/aaa



Bowel cancer screening

Offered to **people** aged **60 to 74 every 2 years**. From 2021 to 2025, screening will gradually be offered to people in their 50s as well. Those aged 75 or over can request screening by calling **0800 7076060**.

www.nhs.uk/bowel



Breast screening

Offered routinely to **women** aged from **50 up to their 71st birthday**. Older women can self-refer.

www.nhs.uk/breast



Cervical screening

Offered to **women** aged from **25 to 49** every 3 years, and **women** aged from **50 to 64** every 5 years.

www.nhs.uk/cervical



Diabetic eye screening

Offered annually to **people** with diabetes **aged 12 and over**.

www.nhs.uk/diabeticseye



Newborn screening

- **newborn** hearing
- physical examination (for problems with eyes, hearts, hips and testes) within **3 days** of birth and again at **6 to 8 weeks** of age
- **newborn** blood spot (for 9 rare conditions)

www.nhs.uk/pregnancyscreening



Screening in pregnancy

- sickle cell and thalassaemia (ideally by **10 weeks**)
- infectious diseases (HIV, hepatitis B and syphilis)
- Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome and Patau's syndrome
- 11 physical conditions in the baby (**20-week** scan)
- diabetic retinopathy (for women with diabetes)

www.nhs.uk/pregnancyscreening





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