National Cancer Screening programmes

There are 3 important National Screening Programmes, designed to help the diagnosis and prevention of cancer. These are the Breast screening, the Cervical screening and the Bowel Cancer screening programmes.

NHS Breast Cancer Screening.

About 1 in 8 women in the UK are diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime. If it's detected early, treatment is more successful and there's a good chance of recovery.

Breast screening aims to find breast cancers early. It uses an X-ray test called a mammogram that can spot cancers when they're too small to see or feel.

As the likelihood of getting breast cancer increases with age, all women aged from 50 to their 71st birthday who are registered with a GP are automatically invited for breast cancer screening every 3 years.

In the meantime, if you're worried about breast cancer symptoms, such as a lump or an area of thickened tissue, or you notice that your breasts look or feel different from what's normal for you, do not wait to be offered screening, make an appointment to see a GP.

If you have missed your screening you can contact Wiltshire Breast screening service on 01793 604036

NHS Bowel Cancer Screening

Bowel cancer is the 4th most common type of cancer. Screening can help find it at an early stage, when it's easier to treat. It's available to everyone aged 60 or over. This is expanding to include those over 56 in 2021.

Everyone aged 60 to 74 who is registered with a GP is automatically sent a bowel cancer screening kit every 2 years. This is a home test kit, called a faecal immunochemical test (FIT), to collect a small sample of poo and send it to a lab. This is checked for tiny amounts of blood. Blood can be a sign of polyps or bowel cancer. Polyps are growths in the bowel. They are not cancer, but they may turn into cancer over time.

If the test finds anything unusual, you might be asked to have further tests to confirm or rule out cancer.

Always contact the surgery if you have symptoms you are concerned about at any age, or if you are worried about a family history of bowel cancer, even if you have recently completed an NHS FIT test .

Anyone over 60 and those over 74 who would like to order a kit can call the free bowel cancer screening helpline on 0800 707 60 60.

NHS Cervical Screening

A smear test checks the health of your cervix. It's not a test for cancer, it's a test to help prevent cancer. All women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 64 should be invited by letter to make an appointment with one of our Practice Nurses

During the screening appointment, a small sample of cells will be taken from your cervix.

The sample is checked for certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV) that can cause changes to the cells of your cervix. These are called "high risk" types of HPV. If these types of HPV are not found, you do not need any further tests.

If these types of HPV are found, the sample is then checked for any changes in the cells of your cervix. These can then be treated before they get a chance to turn into cervical cancer.

You'll get your results by letter, usually in about 2 weeks. It will explain what happens next.

If you have any questions regarding the programme or think you should have been called for screening, please contact the Surgery.