



Did you know about NHS England's earlier diagnosis campaign focused on symptoms of abdominal and urological cancers?



NHS England (NHSE) is re-running national campaign activity in England to increase public knowledge of signs and symptoms of abdominal and urological cancer and tackle the barriers to people seeking help.

The campaign runs in England from January to March 2025. Campaign activity will target people aged 50 and over, as they are most at risk of cancer [1]. The campaign particularly targets people from lower socio-economic groups [2] and ethnic minority groups who are at greater risk of experiencing health inequalities [3].

The campaign focuses on the symptoms of diarrhoea or discomfort in the tummy area for three weeks or more, or seeing blood in pee even just once.

It will encourage people who have noticed something in their body that doesn't feel right and are worried it could be cancer to contact their GP practice.

How will the campaign be promoted?

The campaign will run adverts across social media, TV, community radio and in newspapers. Activity will target ethnic minority audiences including Black and South Asian communities, and includes engagement with organisations to reach excluded disabled audiences with bespoke materials including British Sign Language (BSL) and EasyRead content.

Why are we supporting the campaign?

We know that earlier diagnosis of cancer can save lives.

People diagnosed with cancer at an earlier stage are more likely to survive as they have more treatment options than people diagnosed later.

We know there is a low awareness of symptoms of abdominal and urological cancers (12% of people recalled blood in pee and 18% of people identified blood in poo [4]).

Encouraging timely action in response to signs and symptoms can support better outcomes.



Five-year cancer survival by stage at diagnosis *

Diagnosed at earliest stage (stage 1)

Bladder cancer [5]



79%

Kidney cancer [6]



88%

Diagnosed at latest stage (stage 4)



11%



14%

* 5-year age standardised net survival for stage 4 bladder cancer is not available. Non-standardised 5-year net survival is presented instead (England, 2013–2017).

How you and your practice can support the campaign

- Be prepared that there may be an increase in patients, and increase in queries about symptoms featured in the campaign. Patients may have questions or concerns about possible signs and symptoms of abdominal and urological cancers.
- Familiarise yourself with [NG12 guidance](#), particularly for abdominal and urological cancers (including gynaecological cancers which can present with similar symptoms).
- Visit our GP and Practice Cancer Insight Guides at cruk.org/GPguides to support your decision making.
- Access our Safety netting webpage at cruk.org/safetynetting to support people until their symptoms are explained or resolved.
- Inform your wider practice team of the campaign – including receptionists, practice nurses and those involved with managing patients with long-term conditions, as they are a key touchpoint for patients.
- Use your clinical system to stay in touch and identify people in key groups who are less likely to contact their GP such as older people, people whose first language isn't English, ethnic minority communities and people with learning disabilities.
- Download information to raise public awareness in a range of formats from our publications page at cruk.org/publications

Key messages to share with patients

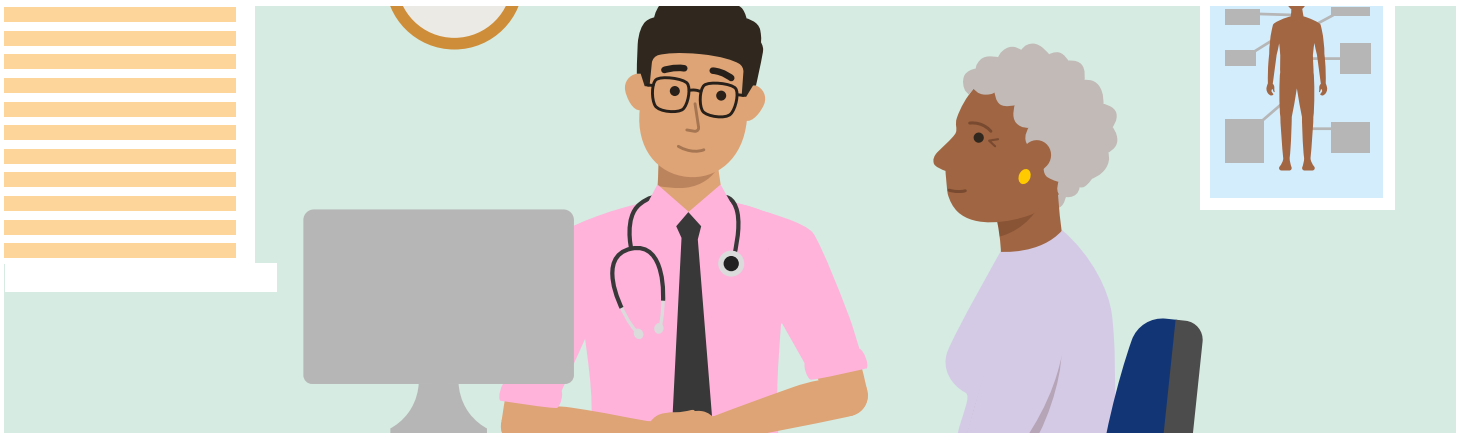
Consider adding these to your practice website or send via text to support campaign activity.

- Contact your GP practice if you've had tummy troubles such as
 - discomfort or diarrhoea for three weeks or more
 - if you've seen blood in your pee – even just once
- Download public facing materials and resources to support the campaign such as posters and digital screens content. You can access them via the Campaign Resource Centre at [Earlier Diagnosis – Reducing Cancer Barriers](#) and [Abdominal and Urological symptoms of cancer](#).
- It's important you complete follow-up tests or attend specialist appointments requested by your GP practice.



“As GPs, we know that diagnosing abdominal and urological cancers can be challenging, often due to non-specific symptoms which could indicate cancer. It's important that we act promptly to investigate symptoms and consider referral pathways, particularly for people over 50.”

Dr Neil Smith
Cancer Research UK GP



Top tips to support your practice

- ✓ Make sure to ask people presenting with abdominal and urological symptoms about cancer risk factors like smoking and family history.
- ✓ Be aware that non-specific symptoms such as abdominal pain, fatigue and weight loss could indicate cancer.
- ✓ Request a FIT for people presenting with signs or symptoms of colorectal cancer such as abdominal pain or a persistent change in bowel habit.
- ✓ Be aware that some people may feel less comfortable or confident about completing tests, so have measures in place to follow up.
- ✓ Request a blood test for CA125 if you suspect cancer in women presenting with persistent abdominal discomfort, diarrhoea or urinary urgency.



Investigate persistent abdominal pain by requesting direct access to an ultrasound or CT scan if available.



Safety net people until symptoms are explained or resolved, or they're referred for further investigation.

Resources



Save and share our [Bladder and kidney cancer insight guide](#) for health professionals to support recognition and referral in your practice.



Visit our [Investigations webpage](#) for further information about the Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) or Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) testing.



Visit [NHS GatewayC](#) for free continuing professional development (CPD) learning.

References

- [1] Cancer Research UK. [Age and cancer](#). Accessed 2021.
- [2] Cancer Registration Statistics, England. [Cancer incidence by deprivation quintile - NHS England Digital](#). Accessed 2022.
- [3] Ethnic inequalities in mortality in England: a complex picture requiring tailored, evidence-based responses. [Ethnic Inequalities In Mortality In England | The King's Fund](#). Accessed 2023.
- [4] Whitelock, V. (2023), Cancer Research UK's September 2023 [Cancer Awareness Measure 'Plus: \(CAM+\)](#). Accessed 2024.
- [5] Office for National Statistics (ONS), [Cancer survival in England: adult, stage at diagnosis and childhood - patients followed up to 2018](#). Accessed 2024.
- [6] NHS England, [Cancer survival in England, cancers diagnosed 2016 to 2020, followed up to 2021](#). Accessed 2024.



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