



An overview of the safety netting pathway

This flow chart illustrates the key steps that primary care professionals can take to manage patients with potential cancer symptoms until they're explained or resolved, or the patient is referred.



Patient consultation

- Check patients' address and phone numbers are up to date on the system

No/low suspicion of cancer

Tell the patient:

- when to return if symptoms don't resolve
- if there are any symptoms or changes to look out for

- Give guidance in both verbal and written formats. Make sure the patient understands the advice.
- Log safety netting advice in notes and code symptoms.
- Clearly communicate who is responsible for follow-up.

Repeated consultations for persistent, recurring or new symptoms

Suspicion remains low

Continue to safety net:

- Consider an alternative referral route.
- Consider a planned or patient-initiated review.

Tell the patient:

- what the next steps are and the timeframe

Cancer suspected



Further investigations

Tell the patient:

- the reason for tests
- the importance of completing and returning tests in a timely manner or attending follow-up appointments
- who will make the follow-up appointment
- when to expect results and how these will be communicated

GP practice to:

- check the system for test completion and patient attendance at follow-up appointments
- consider using an **e-safety netting tool** that contacts patients who haven't attended tests or follow-up appointments within a set timeframe
- make sure staff know who is responsible for communicating results to the patient

Urgent referral is not warranted

- Consider an alternative referral route.
- Continue to monitor patient until signs and symptoms are explained or resolved.

Tell the patient:

- their results, next steps and the timeframe for these
- when to contact the GP if they experience new or recurring symptoms

Urgent referral

Tell the patient:

- their results, next steps and the timeframe for these
- the reason for referral and testing
- who is responsible for managing them
- what to do if they don't receive an appointment as expected

