



About a CT Colonography



**This is a Plain English information
leaflet about a bowel test.**

What is BowelScreen?

BowelScreen is the bowel screening programme in Ireland.

It is part of the National Screening Service.

The Government pays for this health service.

You do not have to pay to use the service. It is free.

What is a Bowel?

Your bowel is inside your body.

It is a long tube that joins your tummy to your bottom.

Your bowel helps break down the food you eat.

This gives you energy, minerals, vitamins, and water.

The food you eat goes through your bowel and comes out your bottom as poo.

Checking your Bowel

There are different tests that you can have to check that your bowel is healthy.

One test is called a colonoscopy.

You can read about having a colonoscopy in our photo story.

This leaflet is about a test called a CT colonography.

You might have this test if you cannot have a colonoscopy.

Your doctor or nurse will tell you if a CT colonography is the right test for you.

This test does not suit everyone.

What is a CT Colonography?

A CT colonography is an examination of your bowel.

A special machine, called a scanner, takes x-rays of your bowel.

The doctor can look at these pictures of your bowel.

This test checks for signs of polyps or cancer in your bowel.

Polyps are small growths that are not cancer but that might turn into cancer over time.

Why do I need a CT Colonography?

You might need a CT colonography if we need more information about your bowel.

You might need a CT colonography if you are not able to have a colonoscopy.

CT colonography is a good way to check for bowel cancer and other bowel problems if you cannot have a colonoscopy.

Your team will tell you why a CT colonography is the best test for you.

If cancer in your bowel is found early, it is easier to treat.

You may have more chance of getting better.

Getting ready for a CT Colonography test

A member of the team will phone you before your CT colonography.

This is a nurse called a pre-assessment nurse.

They will explain what will happen during the test.

They will give you an appointment date and time.

Tell us if you cannot keep your appointment.

We will give you a different date and time.

They will ask questions about your health.

It is important to tell them if you are taking any medications.

You can ask any questions that you have.

Before the CT colonography, you will have to empty your bowel.

This is to make sure that the doctor or radiographer can see your bowel clearly.

Getting ready for a CT Colonography test

You will get medication to take.

You will be told when and how to take this.

Follow the instructions carefully.

You will be told what you can and cannot eat or drink before the test.

You will have to follow a clear liquid diet the day before the test.

You will get diarrhoea when you take the medicine so stay close to the toilet.

On the day of the test, you cannot eat or drink anything before the test.

On the day of the test, you will go to a hospital for your CT colonography test.

BowelScreen will tell you where to go.

Having a CT Colonography

You can read our photo story about having a CT colonography at the hospital.

It tells you what will happen.

The CT colonography appointment takes about an hour.

The test takes 30 minutes.

You can go home after the test.

You do not have to stay in hospital.

You can do your normal everyday tasks.

It is a good idea to have someone to bring you home after the test.

Important Things to Know

Bowel screening can save lives, but no screening test is perfect. Please see our leaflet on the benefits and harms of screening for more information.

Sometimes bowel cancers or polyps might be missed.

For most people, having a CT colonography is safe. We will check on you carefully during the test.

Your stomach may be a bit bloated. You may have cramps. This will soon go away.

You may feel dizzy or lightheaded for a short while.

In rare cases, you may get a small tear in your bowel. If this happens, you will stay in hospital so we can keep a check on you.

If you have any worries about having a CT colonography, you can talk to a member of staff at your appointment.

You can call our Freephone 1800 45 45 55

Getting your Result

You will get a letter with the result of your test.

The result takes a few weeks.

Most people get a normal result.

You will be invited back to BowelScreen in 2 years.

You could get a not normal result.

This means you need more tests or treatment.

We will explain this to you, and we will talk about next steps together.

Your doctor will get a copy of your result.

Staying Healthy

A healthy lifestyle is very important.

To cut down your chances of bowel cancer:

- Exercise
- Stay at a healthy weight
- Do not drink too much alcohol.

Eat plenty of fruit, vegetables, brown bread, brown rice, and cereals.

Eating lots of red meat is bad for your bowel.

More information

www.bowelscreen.ie

Phone us free on 1800 45 45 55

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The photo on the cover was taken by Joseph Carr
Photography.



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

