



26 March 2021
LCCG 2021_019

Media Release

During Bowel Cancer Awareness Month people of Leeds are urged to be aware of bowel cancer symptoms

As part of Bowel Cancer Awareness Month during April, health and care organisations across Leeds are urging people of all ages to be more aware of the signs of the disease and see a GP if they have any concerns.

Bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK and the second biggest cancer killer. Over 42,000 people are diagnosed with bowel cancer every year in the UK. Around 268,000 people living in the UK today have been diagnosed with bowel cancerⁱ

Bowel Cancer is the UK's second biggest cancer killer. Every 15 minutes in the UK someone is diagnosed with bowel cancer. It's more common in older people but it can affect people of all ages. Around 268,000 people living in the UK today have been diagnosed with the disease.

Dr Sarah Forbes, Associate Medical Director at NHS Leeds CCG and joint clinical lead for the Leeds Cancer Programme, said, "Despite incidences of bowel cancer steadily falling in the last decade, unfortunately, cases of bowel cancer are still too common. 1 in 15 men and 1 in 18 women will be diagnosed with bowel cancer during their lifetime. If it's caught early, however, there's a really good chance of recovery.

"While the disease is more common in people over the age of 50, bowel cancer can affect at any age with more than 2,500 people under the age of 50 being diagnosed in the UK every year. It's never been more important to make people from every age group aware of the symptoms.

"Being aware of the key symptoms and visiting your GP if things don't feel right can help increase chances of an early diagnosis. Survival rate increases significantly if bowel cancer is diagnosed at the earliest stage; however this drops significantly as the disease develops."

26 March 2021
LCCG 2021_019

Through the Leeds Cancer Programme, the city has recently introduced an improved and easier to use and more accurate Bowel Cancer Screening test, called the Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT test). This test can be given to patients by their GP which to complete in their own home with the following symptoms:

- blood in your poo
- diarrhoea or constipation for no obvious reason
- a feeling of not having fully emptied your bowels after going to the toilet
- pain in your stomach or back passage (anus)
- Unexplained weight loss

Most people with these symptoms don't have bowel cancer. Other health problems can cause similar symptoms. However, if you have one or more of these, or if things just don't feel right, see your GP.

For more information on screening and symptoms go to NHS website at www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-cancer/ or visit Bowel Cancer UK.

Ends

Notes to editors:

The Leeds Cancer Programme

The [Leeds Cancer Programme](#) is a pioneering partnership between Macmillan Cancer Support, Leeds City Council and NHS Leeds CCG, which aims to transform cancer services across the city. The programme aims to achieve the best in cancer care for the people of Leeds and work with all communities to ensure that everyone affected by cancer has access to the same high quality care.

Facts about bowel cancer

- Bowel cancer is the second biggest cancer killer in the UK claiming more than 16,000 lives a year (over 44 people every day).



26 March 2021
LCCG 2021_019

- Bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK, after breast, prostate and lung cancers.
- Every 15 minutes in the UK someone is diagnosed with bowel cancer. That's almost 42,000 people every year. Every 30 minutes someone dies from the disease in the UK.
- Bowel cancer is treatable and curable, especially if diagnosed early. Nearly everyone diagnosed at the earliest stage will survive bowel cancer. However this drops significantly as the disease develops. Early diagnosis really does save livesⁱⁱ.

For media enquiries please contact:

Issued by the communications team at NHS Leeds CCG. You can contact the team on 0113 84 35528 or 0113 84 35470. Alternatively please email us: leedsccg.comms@nhs.net.

ⁱ Bowel Cancer UK

ⁱⁱ Bowel Cancer UK