

What can you do...

- Participate in the free National Bowel Cancer Screening Program from age 50-74.
- Eat for health, including limiting red and processed meats, and eating plenty of fibre.
- Be active and maintain a healthy weight.
- Stop smoking.
- Avoid alcohol use.
- See your GP or healthcare provider if you have any symptoms or notice any unusual changes.
- See your GP or healthcare provider if you have a family history of bowel cancer, bowel diseases, or genetic disorders.

Further information

National Bowel Cancer Screening Program

T: 1800 627 701

cancerscreening.gov.au/bowel

Cancer Australia

T: 1800 624 973

canceraustralia.gov.au

Cancer Council

bowelcancer.org.au

If you have...

- thrown out or misplaced your kit,
- never received your kit, or
- changed mailing address,

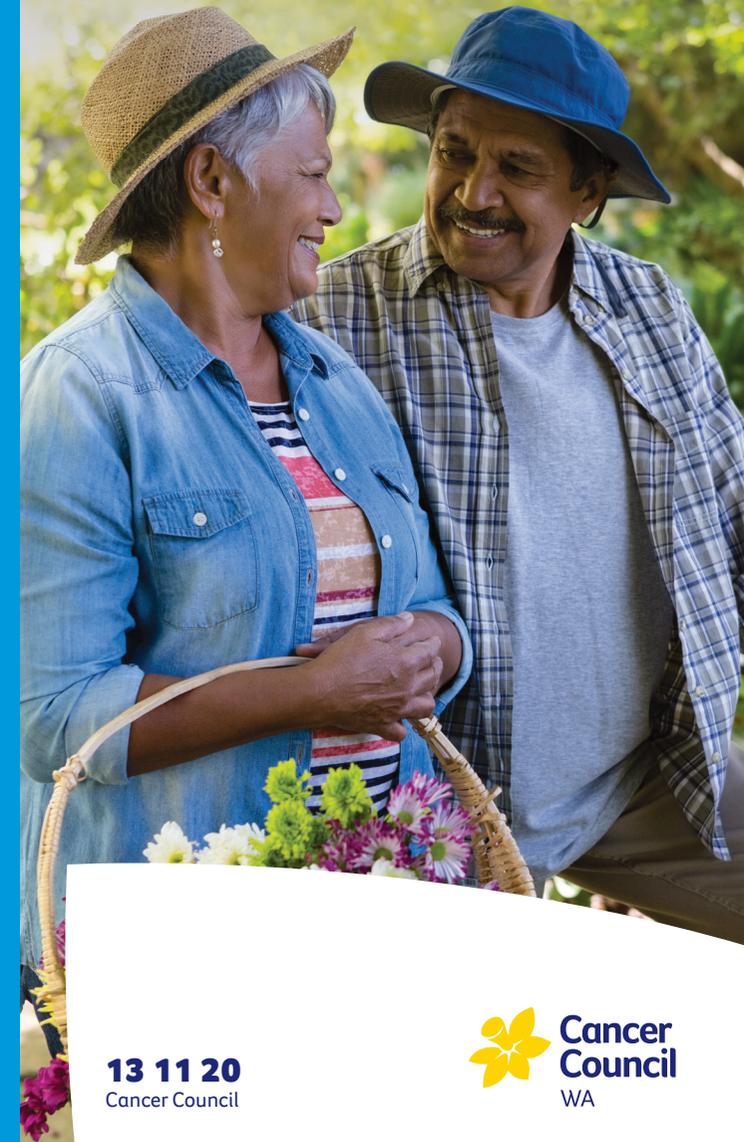
it's easy to order a free replacement kit with your Medicare card - just scan the QR code below to go straight to the National Cancer Screening Register.



For support and information on cancer and cancer-related issues, speak to a cancer nurse on **13 11 20**. Calls are confidential and available statewide Monday to Friday during business hours. Local call costs apply, except for mobiles.

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Bowel cancer: A simple test could save your life.



13 11 20
Cancer Council

 **Cancer
Council**
WA

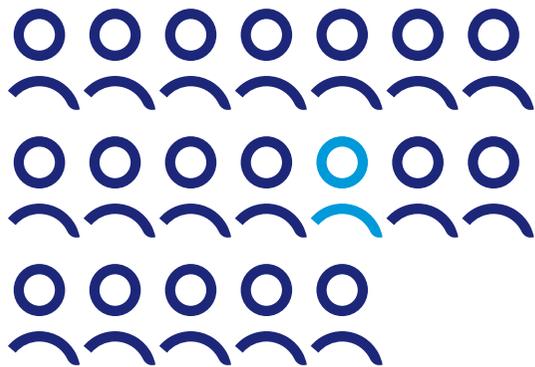
What is bowel cancer?

Bowel cancer is the second biggest cancer killer in Australia and one of the most common cancers affecting Western Australians.

Bowel cancer is cancer in any part of the large bowel (colon or rectum). It is sometimes known as colorectal cancer and might also be called colon cancer or rectal cancer, depending on where it starts.

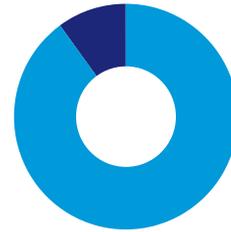
Bowel cancer usually develops from the growth of abnormal cells called polyps. Polyps are common and in most cases are non-cancerous, however, some can develop into bowel cancer. If polyps are removed, the risk of bowel cancer is greatly reduced.

1 in 19 Australians will develop bowel cancer in their lifetime



Source: AIHW 2021

When found early, over 90% of those diagnosed with bowel cancer will beat it



Source: AIHW 2021

Who is at risk?

Bowel cancer can occur at any age, but the risk increases with age, and is higher for people over 50. Other risk factors include:

- **Lifestyle factors:** a diet high in red or processed meats or low in fibre, not being a healthy weight, not being active, using alcohol, or smoking.
- **Previous history** of bowel cancer or polyps.
- **Some bowel diseases**, including ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease.
- **Inherited gene disorders**, including Lynch syndrome and Familial Adenomatous Polyposis.
- **Strong family history** of bowel cancer.

If you're concerned about your risk, see your GP or healthcare provider.

What are the symptoms of bowel cancer?

Bowel cancer often occurs without symptoms but it is important to see your GP or healthcare provider if you notice any of the following:

- blood in your poo
- a change in bowel habits (diarrhoea or constipation) that last more than four weeks
- abdominal pain or bloating
- loss of appetite
- unexplained weight loss, tiredness, weakness, or breathlessness.

In most cases, the above changes will not be due to bowel cancer but it is important that you discuss them with your GP or healthcare provider.

Screening for peace of mind

The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program sends a free home test kit to Australians aged between 50 and 74 years. Cancer Council recommend completing the home test kit when it arrives in your mailbox, as it can help find bowel cancer before you have any symptoms. The home test kit is simple, quick, and convenient! Visit the Program's website cancerscreening.gov.au/bowel to see if you are eligible, or call **1800 627 701** to find out more or to order a replacement kit.

Positive result

See your GP or healthcare provider for more tests. This does not always mean you have cancer.

Negative result

Repeat the test in two years.