



# Doing the BowelScreen Test

## A Photo Story



Una gets an invitation letter from BowelScreen. It is about doing a test that shows if she has early signs of bowel cancer. This test is for a person that feels well and has no signs of cancer.



Una reads the information leaflet.

She talks to her friend Ann about the test.

Una feels a bit nervous about doing the test.



Una and Ann look at the video on

[www.bowelscreen.ie](http://www.bowelscreen.ie)

<https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/bowel-screening/home-screening-test-to-detect-signs-of-bowel-cancer.html>



Una thinks about the test a bit more.

She thinks about the good and bad things about the test.



Una decides to do the test.

She rings BowelScreen to ask for a test kit.

She gives her name, address, and the name of her GP.



A few days later, a test kit arrives in the post.

### What is the BowelScreen home test kit?

This is a simple test that looks for tiny amounts of blood in your bowel motion (also called a stool). Please read these instructions carefully before you do the home test. To do the home test you will need to produce a bowel motion.

**What is in the home test kit?**  
The home test kit contains:

- a letter,
- a plastic bag with a label,
- a tube and sampling stick for taking your sample, and
- a pre-paid envelope for returning your test sample.

**How do I do the test?**

- 1 Write the date on the plastic bag.
- 2 The test can be done at any time of day or night. Put the stool in the bowl to be tested.
- 3 Wash and dry your hands.

7 Put the tube in the plastic bag and close the bag.

8 Please check:

- Have you put the date on the label on the plastic bag?
- Have you closed the tube with your test sample?
- Have you put the sealed tube in the plastic bag?

If you answer yes to these questions, your sample is ready to post.

9 Put the plastic bag with the tube in the pre-paid envelope and seal it. The envelope is safe to send in the post. The postage is free.

Post immediately. The sample should be posted within seven days of the test being taken.



**BowelScreen**  
An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Putóige  
The National Bowel Screening Programme

CR-COM-022 Rev05  
Enc CR-COM-002

Mr John Doe  
Some Address 1  
Some Address 2  
Some Address 3  
Some Address 4  
Some Address 5  
Some City/County  
Some Postcode  
COR ID: 000011111

19/10/20

Dear Mr Doe,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in BowelScreen - The National Bowel Screening Programme. Doing the BowelScreen home test is a good way of looking after your health.

The test looks for blood in your bowel motion (a bowel motion is also called a stool) which is not visible to the eye. Blood in the stool can be caused by a number of harmless conditions, as well as by bowel cancer. You do the test in your own home. It only takes one visit to the toilet and is quick, easy and painless.

Your BowelScreen home test kit which came with this letter contains:

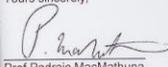
- instructions
- a plastic bag with a label,
- a tube and sampling stick for taking your sample,
- a pre-paid envelope for returning your test sample.

In most cases the BowelScreen test will be returned with a normal result, however some people will receive a not normal result. This means that blood was found in the test sample. It does not necessarily mean that the person has bowel cancer but it does mean that they may need to have another, more detailed, test called a colonoscopy. The colonoscopy would be carried out in a designated screening colonoscopy unit.

In the case where a person is invited to attend for a colonoscopy every effort would be made to ensure that the screening colonoscopy unit is as close to their home as possible, however in some cases due to the geographic location of the units, some travel may be required.

Please read the instructions carefully. It should answer any questions you may have. **But if you need some more information, just call us on Freephone 1800 45 45 55.** The test sample should be returned within seven days.

Yours sincerely,



Prof Padraic MacMathuna  
Interim Clinical Director

1800 45 45 55 info@bowelscreen.ie www.bowelscreen.ie

**If you have any problems doing the home test or need some more information, call Freephone 1800 45 45 55.** Once you have sent back your sample, we will send you a letter with the results of your test in four weeks.

In the test kit, there is:

- a letter and information leaflet
- a plastic bag
- a tube with a sampling stick
- an envelope so you can post it back for free.



Una looks at the test kit.

She can ask someone to help her with the test if she wants.



When she is ready, Una takes the test kit to the bathroom.

The test only takes a minute.

It only needs one visit to the bathroom.



Una writes the date on the plastic bag.



Una puts toilet paper in the toilet bowl.



She makes a poo onto the toilet paper.



Una takes out the tube.

She twists the green cap open.



Una pulls out the sampling stick.

She scrapes the end of the stick on the poo.

It doesn't matter if the stick gets wet.



Una puts the sampling stick back in the tube.



Una twists the green cap closed until she hears a click.

She does not open the tube again.

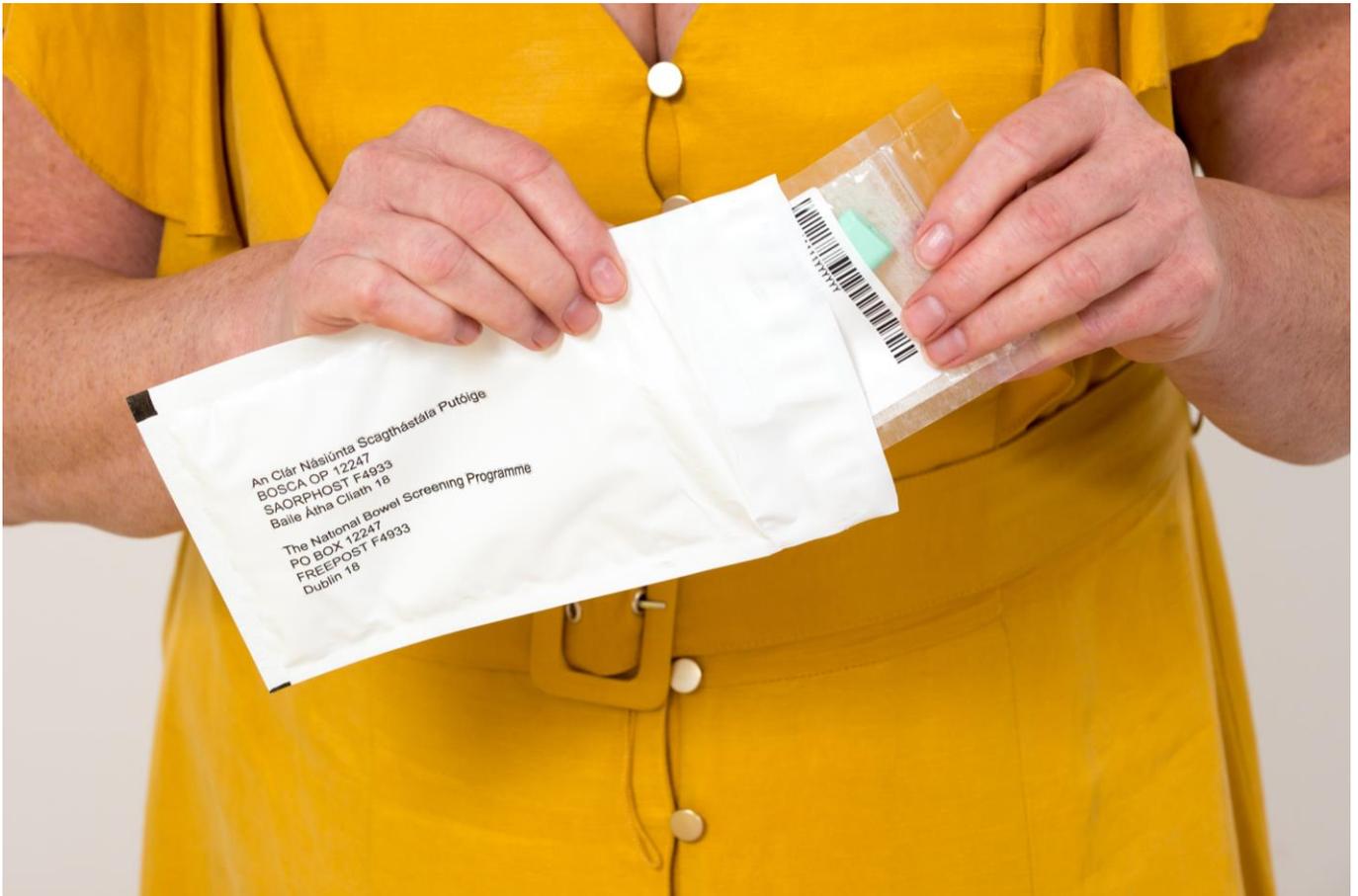


Una puts the tube in the plastic bag and closes it.

She checks the date on the bag.



She flushes the toilet and washes her hands.



Next, Una puts the plastic bag with the tube into the envelope and closes it.

She posts the sample back for testing.



It is important to post the sample the same day you take it or the next day.

The envelope is safe to put in the ordinary post. You do not need a stamp.

Dear Ms. Kelly

You recently returned a completed BowelScreen home test. The result was normal. This means that the test could not find any or enough blood in your sample to recommend any further follow up. You do not need to take any further action. It is important to understand that no screening test is 100 per cent effective, and if you notice any changes in your bowel habits or have any concerns about your bowel health, please contact your GP (family doctor) without delay. For people in the eligible age-range (60-69), we will write in two years when your next home test is due. BowelScreen strongly advises that you complete your test each time it is due.

Una will get a letter with her result.

She should get this letter within a few weeks.

Una's doctor will also get a copy of her result.



## More information



[www.bowelscreen.ie](http://www.bowelscreen.ie)



Phone us free on 1800 45 45 55



The photos in this story were taken by Pauline Dennigan Photography.



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála  
National Screening Service

