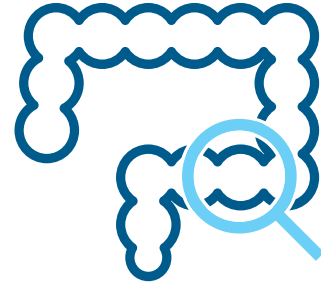


# Screening for bowel cancer



**If you are aged between 50 and 74, you can be screened for cancer in the colon and rectum (bowel cancer). Screening for bowel cancer is an examination of men and women who do not have symptoms of bowel cancer.**

**The Danish Health Authority recommends screening for bowel cancer. But it is important that you make the decision yourself.**

## Why are you invited to the screening?

If bowel cancer is detected early, there are better treatment options. Therefore, you are invited to an examination even though you have no symptoms of bowel cancer.

Even if you are screened, you may still have or develop bowel cancer. Therefore, you should always see your doctor if you have symptoms such as:

- Changed bowel movement
- The bowel does not empty itself properly
- Unexplained fatigue
- Stomach ache
- Blood or mucus in your stools
- Weight loss without reason

## How is the screening performed?

Your region will send you a package with the items you need in order to take a sample of your stools. Once you have sent your stool sample, it will be examined for small amounts of blood. If there is no blood in your sample, you will be offered to send a sample again after two years.

### Your Region can answer your questions

Your Region can answer any questions about the examination and when it is time for a new examination.

**North Denmark Region:** +45 9764 1712  
(Region Nordjylland)

**Central Denmark Region:** +45 7842 0170  
(Region Midtjylland)

**Region of Southern Denmark:** +45 7940 6785  
(Region Syddanmark)

**Region Zealand:** +45 5651 2828  
(Region Sjælland)

**Capital Region of Denmark:** +45 3867 1717  
(Region Hovedstaden)

If, on the other hand, blood is found in your sample, you will be offered a colonoscopy. This examination can show if you have cancer or polyps (growths in the bowel) that can develop into cancer.

## What are the pros of screening?

- There are better treatment options if cancer is detected early. By taking part in the screening, you can reduce your risk of dying from bowel cancer.
- If the cancer is detected early, there are better options for a less invasive treatment.

## What are the cons of screening?

- Even if blood is found in your stool sample, it is not certain that you have cancer or other disease in the colon or rectum. The cause may instead be bleeding from a scratch or haemorrhoid. The period in which you are waiting for the test results or further examinations may cause anxiety. Even if no blood is found in the stool sample, you may nevertheless have or develop bowel cancer.
- Some people experience discomfort from having to take a stool sample. Most experience discomfort when clearing the bowel with a laxative before the colonoscopy.
- There is a risk of unnecessary treatment as the examinations, in some cases, may detect polyps that will not develop into cancer. The examinations can also detect cancer that will not affect you in your lifetime. Unnecessary treatment may have harmful effects.

You can read about bowel cancer and the screening programme at [www.sst.dk/screening](http://www.sst.dk/screening) or by scanning the QR code with the camera on your phone.

