Knowing when you might be unwell and going for screening tests

This leaflet will help you to learn about signs and symptoms of cancer and going for screening tests.
People of any age can develop cancer, but it is more common in older people.

This leaflet will help you to be aware of any changes in your health which need to be checked out by your doctor.
Knowing when you might be unwell

What’s inside?

- The most common signs of a possible cancer (Part 1)
- Further signs of a possible illness (Part 2)
- Body awareness for men (Part 3)
- Body awareness for women (Part 4)
- Additional information (Part 5)
- Contact information (Back page)
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The most common signs of a possible cancer
These are the most important signs

These are some of the things you should have checked out

Being sick a lot

Lumps in your body

Passing blood at the toilet
Knowing when you might be **unwell**

- Not wanting to eat
- Weight loss
- Skin changes, moles and warts
- Coughing up blood
Further signs of a possible illness

Other things that can happen which may mean you have a cancer are:

- Tiredness
- Out of breath
- Pain that comes and goes
- Swelling in your stomach

Remember – one or more of these signs does not mean that you have cancer, but you should get it checked out.
Be aware of your body

This is what men can do to spot cancer early

- Being aware of your body is important

- Testicular cancer or cancer in your balls is more common in younger men

- There is no test to find this but you can look and feel for the following:
  - If one is bigger or heavier than the other
  - If you find a lump or they hurt when you touch them

You can learn more about this by reading the booklet “Keeping yourself healthy – a guide to examining your testicles”
This is available by phoning 0131 662 1962
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Be aware of your body

Breast cancer is the most common cancer found in women.

Most breast cancers are found in women over 50 years old.

Being aware of your body will help reduce your risk of getting cancer.

- Look and feel for lumps in your breasts and armpits
- Look for changes in the shape of your breasts
- Look for bleeding from your nipples
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You can learn more about this by reading the leaflet, “Guide to checking your breasts”

When you are over 50 you should receive a letter asking you to have a mammogram. This is an X-ray of your breasts. It will show the doctor if there is a lump or anything wrong. You will have one of these every three years.
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Women are at risk of cervical cancer – this is cancer down below. The symptoms are:

- Unusual bleeding may occur when you are not having your period
- Periods may last for a long time and be really heavier
- You may have an increase in discharge from down below
- You might have pelvic pains

If you are over 25 you should receive a letter asking you to have a smear test

You can learn more about this by reading the booklet “Having a smear test”

This is available from NHS cancer screening programmes
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Additional information

Think about it . . .

By taking the advice in this leaflet you now know what to look for in your body which could help you find cancer early and have it treated.

We hope this leaflet has been helpful.

There is another booklet in this series which is called

**Choosing a healthy lifestyle**

Copies of this leaflet can be downloaded from [http://www.cancernorth.nhs.uk/infoprint.asp](http://www.cancernorth.nhs.uk/infoprint.asp)
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