

What is the symptoms diary?

The symptoms diary aims to help patients with possible signs of bowel cancer to keep track of their symptoms before they visit their GP.

This diary recording will give you a good indication about whether they need further tests for the disease.

The symptoms diary was pioneered by bowel cancer patient Beth Purvis in 2019.

Beth was diagnosed with stage 4 bowel cancer at the age of 37, two years after initially visiting her GP with symptoms, which were repeatedly put down to Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).

As a busy mum, Beth believes that having a mechanism for recording her symptoms in a meaningful way would have helped her to have a better conversation with her GP, and they may have referred her for testing sooner. That's why she created the diary.

The diary has been produced in collaboration with Bowel Cancer UK and is formally endorsed by the Royal College of GPs.



Who should use the symptoms diary?

Patients of any age who are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Bleeding from their bottom and/or blood in their poo
- A persistent and unexplained change in bowel habit
- Unexplained weight loss
- A pain or lump in their tummy
- Extreme tiredness for no obvious reason

How should it be used?

1. You should issue it to patients with potential signs and symptoms of bowel cancer, to help them to keep a record of these ahead of their next consultation
2. A symptomatic patient may attend your surgery having already used the resource and ask to have a conversation about bowel cancer, which may also include a referral request

Where can I get a copy of the symptoms diary?

It can be downloaded from the Bowel Cancer UK website here: [bowelcanceruk.org.uk/symptomsdiary](https://www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/symptomsdiary)