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Dear Patient

I'm sorry you didn't do your NHS Bowel Screening and I urge you to reconsider. The new "FIT" test is over 90% accurate for spotting bowel cancer, which is now becoming the commonest cancer in the UK. It is not always associated with a family history so even if you have no relatives who have had this disease you may still be at risk. This cancer is often "silent" with no symptoms until the tumour grows so big that it causes the classic symptoms of bleeding; pain; a change of bowel habit and eventually blockage.

Bowel Screening is good because polyps and very early cancers can be detected before they cause symptoms. Patients can be treated quickly and any problems resolved without the need for a "stoma" i.e., a bag attached to the outside of the stomach to collect poo/ faeces in situations where part of the bowel has had to be removed.

I do urge you to reconsider your decision not to perform this screening test. It's really easy – just collect a small bit of poo/faeces into the bottle and send it off. If you're not sure how we can talk you through the procedure.

If you would like to go ahead with the screening, then please call the free bowel cancer screening helpline on 0800 707 60 60 to arrange delivery of your free home testing kit.

You never know - prevention is better than cure!

Yours sincerely,

**Dr Victoria Muir**