



April 6th, 2016

## Don't sit on your symptoms

April is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month and cancer nurse specialists at South Tyneside District Hospital are stressing the importance of early diagnosis.

Bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK and the second biggest cancer killer but it is treatable and curable, especially if diagnosed early.

Jane Barnes, one of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's cancer nurse specialists, said: *"Taking part in the bowel cancer screening programme is the best way to get diagnosed early and can save lives. Men and women in England aged between 60 and 74 years, who are registered with a GP, are sent a testing kit every two years. It is vitally important to complete the test, otherwise, you are missing out on chance to detect bowel cancer early when it is easier to treat."*

It is also important to be aware of the symptoms which can include:

- Bleeding from your bottom and/or blood in your poo
- A change in bowel habit lasting three weeks or more
- Unexplained weight loss
- Extreme tiredness for no obvious reason
- A pain or lump in your tummy

Other health problems can cause similar symptoms and most people won't have bowel cancer but if you do have one or more of the symptoms, or if things just don't feel right, go to see your GP.

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*Pictured above: South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust cancer nurse specialists Jane Barnes, left, and Teresa Liddle*

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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