

## Supplementary tables

**Supplementary Table 1.** Positive predictive value of bowel symptoms for detecting colorectal cancer and advanced adenoma in the sigmoidoscopy group

	PPV (%) CRC	PPV (%) Advanced adenoma*
All participants	0.6	4.7
No symptom	0.4	4.6
Abdominal pain	0.4	4.3
Bloating	0.5	4.5
Change in bowel habits	2.2	5.4
Constipation	0.5	3.4
Diarrhoea	1.3	6.3
Rectal bleeding	1.9	7.5

PPV = positive predictive value. \* Individuals with colorectal cancer were excluded from this analysis

**Supplementary Table 2.** Multivariable analysis of the association between symptoms duration and detection of colorectal cancer or advanced adenoma in the sigmoidoscopy and FIT group

Variable	Comparison	Sigmoidoscopy group		FIT group	
		CRC OR (95% CI)	Advanced adenoma* OR (95% CI)	CRC OR (95% CI)	Advanced adenoma* OR (95% CI)
Abdominal pain	≤ 6 months vs. No	0.32 (0.04-2.37)	1.34 (0.83-2.15)	<b>4.58 (2.65-7.93)</b>	1.05 (0.63-1.78)
	> 6 months vs. No	0.60 (0.22-1.67)	0.83 (0.59-1.15)	0.67 (0.31-1.46)	0.77 (0.55-1.08)
Bloating	≤ 6 months vs. No	1.75 (0.35-8.67)	<b>2.75 (1.44-5.28)</b>	0.82 (.019-3.66)	0.53 (0.20-1.44)
	> 6 months vs. No	0.47 (0.15-1.49)	0.76 (0.54-1.08)	0.76 (0.28-2.09)	1.08 (0.71-1.63)
Change in bowel habits	≤ 6 months vs. No	<b>3.05 (1.45-6.40)</b>	0.89 (0.54-1.46)	<b>2.28 (1.21-4.27)</b>	0.73 (0.44-1.21)
	> 6 months vs. No	<b>3.34 (1.77-6.29)</b>	1.23 (0.86-1.74)	1.50 (0.74-3.04)	1.09 (0.73-1.63)
Constipation	≤ 6 months vs. No	2.50 (0.84-7.48)	1.09 (0.50-2.37)	0.21 (0.03-1.57)	1.12 (0.60-2.07)
	> 6 months vs. No	0.30 (0.07-1.23)	0.66 (0.46-0.95)	0.84 (0.42-1.69)	<b>0.67 (0.47-0.95)</b>
Diarrhoea	≤ 6 months vs. No	2.68 (0.93-7.75)	<b>2.19 (1.25-3.83)</b>	0.64 (0.19-2.15)	<b>0.32 (0.11-0.93)</b>
	> 6 months vs. No	1.26 (0.46-3.46)	1.16 (0.79-1.72)	0.18 (0.03-1.31)	<b>0.56 (0.34-0.92)</b>
Rectal bleeding	≤ 6 months vs. No	<b>10.15 (5.84-17.64)</b>	<b>2.09 (1.41-3.10)</b>	<b>2.75 (1.66-4.57)</b>	1.26 (0.96-1.92)
	> 6 months vs. No	<b>3.33 (2.21-5.01)</b>	<b>1.73 (1.45-2.07)</b>	<b>1.65 (1.22-2.21)</b>	<b>0.83 (0.70-0.98)</b>

FIT = faecal immunochemical test. \*Individuals with colorectal cancer were excluded from this analysis. Adjusted for all listed symptoms and age and sex.

**Supplementary Table 3.** Sensitivity, specificity, and positive predictive value of bowel symptoms for detecting colorectal cancer in the FIT group

	Sensitivity %	Specificity %	PPV %
All participants	-	-	4.6
No symptom	-	-	3.9
Abdominal pain	9.0	94.9	7.9
Bloating	2.0	97.5	3.8
Change in bowel habits	8.4	96.2	9.6
Constipation	3.3	95.6	3.6
Diarrhoea	1.7	97.4	3.0
Rectal bleeding	27.8	82.0	6.9

PPV = positive predictive value. CRC = colorectal cancer. FIT = faecal immunochemical test.