

Friendly nudge prompts 40 per cent to visit GP

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More than a third (40 per cent) of people say talking to a friend or relative about a change to their body that was playing on their mind encouraged them to make an appointment with a GP, according to a new survey from Cancer Research UK.

Of these, men were most likely to be given a push by their other halves with nearly three quarters (72 per cent) saying their partner urged them to go whereas just over half (58 per cent) of women said the same.

[Mums](#) also play a pivotal role with nearly a third (29 per cent) of those asked saying it was their mothers who prompted them to make an appointment.

The [online survey](#) of more than 4,200 adults was carried out by YouGov for [Cancer](#) Research UK and Tesco who have just launched a new online video campaign to raise awareness about the importance of talking to your GP about any unusual or persistent changes to your body.

The light-hearted two minute film uses humour to increase awareness of the huge improvements in cancer survival rates since the 1970s. Today, in the UK, you are twice as likely to survive cancer compared to 40 years ago.

Dr Chris Steele from ITV's This Morning is backing the campaign and said: "As a [cancer survivor](#) myself I know how daunting it can feel to take that first step and visit a GP when there's something that's been playing on your mind. Often talking to someone close to you about it first can give you a much needed prompt to take action.

"It's really important that we all get to know our bodies and get any unusual or persistent changes checked out. The chances are it won't be cancer, but if it is, getting it diagnosed and treated at an early stage can make a real difference."

As well as running an in store awareness campaign making Cancer Research UK leaflets about spotting cancer early accessible to millions of customers, Tesco aims to raise £10million this year to fund 32 early diagnosis research projects across the UK.

Dr Claire Knight, health information manager at Cancer Research UK said: "Sometimes we need a bit of a nudge to make an appointment with a GP about any unusual or persistent changes to our bodies. And as our survey shows men in particular tend to speak to their other halves first before seeing their doctor.

"Cancer is most common in the over 50s, but men and women of all ages

who notice a change that's hung around for a few weeks should get it checked out by a doctor. More than likely it won't be anything to worry about but if it is cancer, spotting it in its earlier stages often makes treatment more successful, meaning the chances of recovering are much better."

Ashley Sheppard, 51, from Worcestershire was diagnosed with bowel cancer in 2002 after his wife Alison, 38, encouraged him to go to the doctor. He successfully underwent radiotherapy and surgery and is back at work.

He said: "Before I was diagnosed, I'd seen my doctor as I had some bloating, diarrhoea and constipation and, after a thorough examination, he concluded I had IBS.

"Some months later the symptoms returned, worse than before and I had some bleeding when I went to the toilet.

"I discussed this with my wife Alison who is a nurse and she suggested I go back to the doctor. I was reluctant but after seeing an article in a magazine she was reading about bowel cancer, which listed the symptoms, I decided to take her advice.

"Following tests, I was diagnosed with [bowel cancer](#). I was fortunate that radiotherapy and surgery were successful and in my case they had caught the cancer early.

"Incredibly despite being told the radiotherapy would make me infertile we have gone on to have two more daughters."

More information: To watch the video and find out why you are more likely to survive cancer if it's found at an early stage, visit: www.cruk.org/spotcancerearly.

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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