

People admit risking their health by putting off visit to the doctor

18 September 2012



Almost one in three (32 per cent) people in the UK say that, if they had an unusual or persistent change to their body, thinking it would go away in its own time would stop them from visiting their GP according to a new survey from Cancer Research UK.

What's more, almost one in four (24 per cent) would be put off visiting their GP by the hassle of getting an appointment and one in five (20 per cent) because of the worry of what the doctor might find. Not wanting to waste the doctor's time (19 per cent), not having the time to visit the GP (14 per cent) and [embarrassment](#) about the changes to their body (14 per cent) were other reasons that might prevent people from making an appointment.

The [online survey](#) of more than 2,000 [adults](#) was carried out by YouGov for Cancer Research UK's '[Spot Cancer Early](#)' campaign which aims to encourage people to see their GP sooner rather than later if they notice any unusual or persistent changes to their body. The campaign also aims 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 than 40 years ago.

Of those surveyed, when asked to pick from a list of life events 61 per cent would act soonest to cancel a lost or stolen bank card. Only one in ten Brits (12 per cent) would act most promptly if they noticed an unusual or persistent change in their body.*

Dr Claire Knight, health information manager at Cancer Research UK, said: "We want people to know that you are more likely to survive cancer if it's found at an early stage. It's important to get to know your body so you're familiar with what's normal for you.

"If you notice any unusual or persistent changes, it's really important to take the time to visit your doctor to talk about it. Cancer is most common in the over 50s, but people 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 and it'll be a load off your mind. But if it is something serious, spotting it early can make a real difference because treatment is often simpler and more likely to be effective. A quick visit to your doctor could save your life."

Ann, 77 from Merseyside, was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2003. She said: "I was diagnosed after my GP referred me for an X-ray following an appointment. I had an operation and now, more than eight years on, I am living a very full and active life doing all the things I enjoy. Catching cancer early is so important. I think if anyone has any signs or symptoms they should see their doctor right away."

To find out more about why you are more likely to survive cancer if it's found at an early stage, visit: www.spotcancerearly.com.

Provided by Cancer Research UK

APA citation: People admit risking their health by putting off visit to the doctor (2012, September 18)
retrieved 20 September 2020 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-09-people-health-doctor.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.