



## **News brief**

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### **Informed choice less effective in getting people to do bowel cancer test**

A decision aid designed to help adults with low literacy and education make informed decisions about bowel cancer screening actually deters them from completing tests.

In a trial of the aid, participants given the information (compared to a control group given the government's bowel cancer screening booklet) were shown to be better able to make an 'informed choice', but were less positive than the control group about doing the test.

The Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) is recommended for all Australians 50 and over and is provided free of charge to people turning 50, 55 and 65.

Principal researcher, Dr Sian Smith from the University of Sydney, noted that the study is one of the first decision aid trials to show a reduction in bowel cancer screening participation. "Equally, we should be concerned about participants who decided to do the screening test without having the same level of information, as they may have unrealistic expectations about the possible outcomes of the test," she said.

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