

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month



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April is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month and coincides with the news this week that there is a new blood test that can detect traces of cancer cells meaning that patients could be spared unnecessary chemotherapy.

The blood test is going to be trialled for bowel cancer, and it is thought that it will show whether surgery has been successful in removing all of the tumours.

It is reported that around half of patients with stage 3 bowel cancer are cured with surgery to remove the tumour, but chemotherapy is then used as the “gold standard” treatment to ensure that all cancer cells are eradicated, reducing the risk of the cancer returning. This blood test may remove the need, certainly, for intravenous chemotherapy if it can be shown to be reliable. Intravenous chemotherapy causes the most prevalent side effects.

The blood test works by detecting tiny traces of cancer in the bloodstream, which is called “Circulating Tumour DNA”. If these are found in the blood test, it shows that the cancer has not been cured by surgery, and there is a need for chemotherapy. It is not possible to see such tiny traces on a scan.

With all this said, prevention is better than cure. Statistics show that every 15 minutes, someone in the UK is diagnosed with bowel cancer. The aim of Bowel Cancer Awareness Month is to spotlight the importance of early detection and how that helps with curing the disease.

At Lester Aldridge, we are all too aware of the difficulties faced when cancers are not diagnosed and treated soon enough. Difficulties accessing specialist referrals through GPs, incorrect interpretation of test results and scans alongside unnecessary hospital delays can lead to advanced disease, more invasive and prolonged treatment and, in some cases, death. In these cases, Lester Aldridge has succeeded in securing large amounts of compensation for patients and their families who have experienced these problems.

[Melanie Lidstone-Land](#), Senior Associate, says :

“I have represented many clients who have suffered unnecessary delay in the diagnosis of cancer and when surgery, alone, is not sufficient to cure the disease as a result of that delay. Chemotherapy and radiotherapy is often then required which could have been avoided. This can also mean that the client’s overall outcome is not

as good as it could have been and, tragically, this sometimes leads to a terminal diagnosis. I work quickly, effectively and with empathy for my clients' and their families during these cases which be difficult and, sometimes, time-sensitive."

If you have any questions regarding the above case or need to speak with one of our specialist [personal injury and medical negligence solicitors](#), please email online.enquiries@la-law.com or call [0344 967 0791](tel:0344 967 0791)