



STOOL SPECIMENS FOR MICROBIOLOGY TESTING COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS

Your doctor has ordered tests to be performed on a stool specimen. These tests show if pathogenic (abnormal) bacteria or parasites are growing in your bowel. Results of the test help your doctor treat your symptoms more accurately.

There are different kinds of stool tests. Please follow the instructions for the type of test your doctor has ordered.

Culture for Bacteria

Collection: One specimen is usually enough. **DO NOT** collect more than one specimen a day. **DO NOT** bring in infant diapers.

Container: One (1) Cary Blair vial is labeled "Enteric pathogens". The caps have spoons attached. The fluid inside is pink, mix well. (Alternatively, fresh stool may be collected in a sterile container.)

Delivery: Bring the specimens to the lab within forty eight (48) hours* of collection if collected in Cary Blair or 1 hour if fresh stool. Store in the refrigerator. **DO NOT** freeze the specimens.

Results: These are usually available in one (1) to three (3) days.

Ova and Parasite Exam

Collection: One specimen every other day **OR** three (3) specimens over a ten (10) day period. **DO NOT** collect more than one (1) specimen a day. **DO NOT** bring in infant diapers.

Container: One (1) Unifix or Ecofix. Caps have spoon attached, mix well. The fluid inside is a light green. **The fluid in the vial is poisonous.** (Alternatively, fresh stool may be collected in a sterile container).

Delivery: Bring the specimens to the lab within two (2) weeks* if collected in Unifix or Ecofix or 2 hours if fresh stool. You may bring all the specimens at one (1) time. Store the specimens at room temperature. **DO NOT** freeze the specimens.

Results: These are usually available in three (3) days.

Difficile Toxin Assay

Collection: One specimen is usually enough. **DO NOT** collect more than one specimen a day. **DO NOT** bring in infant diapers.

Container: Fresh stool collected in a sterile container or one (1) Cary Blair vial labeled "Enteric pathogens". The caps have spoons attached. The fluid inside is pink, mix well.

Delivery: Bring the specimens to the lab within five (5) days* of collection. **Store in the refrigerator. DO NOT** freeze the specimens.

Results: These are usually available the same day.

Giardia Antigen

Collection: One specimen is usually enough. **DO NOT** collect more than one specimen a day. **DO NOT** bring in infant diapers.

The doctor may order additional tests based on the results of the first test.

Container: One (1) Cary Blair vial is labeled "Enteric pathogens". The caps have spoons attached. The fluid inside is pink, mix well. (Alternatively, fresh stool may be collected in a sterile container).

Delivery: Bring the specimens to the lab within two (2) weeks* of collection if collected in Cary Blair or 1 hour if fresh stool. Store in the refrigerator. **DO NOT** freeze the specimens.

Results: These are usually available in one (1) to three (3) days.

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☐ **Stool for lactoferrin (white blood cells)**

Collection: One specimen is usually enough.

Container: Collect in sterile container.

Delivery: Store specimen refrigerated or at room temperature and bring to the lab within two (2) weeks*. Store the specimens at room temperature or refrigerator. **DO NOT** freeze the specimens.

Results: These are usually available the same day.

☐ **Rotavirus**

Collection: One specimen is usually enough.

Container: Collect in sterile container.

Delivery: Refrigerate specimen and bring to the lab within 24 hours.

Results: These are usually available the same day.

How to collect specimen:

1. Bring the collection container with you into the bathroom.
2. Urinate first.
3. Put Saran Wrap (or a similar wrap) over the toilet seat. Catch the stool specimen in the Saran Wrap. A clean empty plastic container can also be used to collect a specimen.
4. Fill all the containers to the FILL line (**DO NOT** overfill).

For Enteric Pathogen Transport Media (Cary Blair), Ecofix or Unifix containers:

- Use the spoons attach to the lids.
- Fill the vials to the red FILL line. **DO NOT** overfill. **DO NOT** dump out the fluid
- **DO NOT INTERCHANGE CAPS IN THE FILLING PROCESS.**
- Recap. Shake hard
- Refrigerate Enteric Pathogen Transport Media (Cary Blair).
- Keep Ecofix or Unifix at room temperature or refrigerated.

If collecting fresh stool:

- Use a disposable tool such as a plastic spoon or wooden ice cream stick.
- Transfer a walnut size piece of stool into a sterile (preferred) or clean container.
- For most tests, bring to the laboratory **within 1 hour** of collection.

5. Label each container with your full name and the date and time collected.
6. Wash your hands with soap and water.
7. Take the specimen to the lab within the delivery time guidelines listed above.
*Remember that the sooner these samples are submitted to the laboratory, the sooner your doctor will have the results.

Special Instructions for Children in Diapers:

1. Apply a pediatric urine collection bag. This prevents contamination of the stool with urine.
2. Line the diaper with Saran Wrap or turn diaper inside out so the plastic coating is against the skin.
3. **DO NOT LET URINE OR WATER TOUCH SPECIMENS FOR THE OVA AND PARASITE EXAM.**