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Laboratory - Stool Culture and/or Parasite Exam

Description:

Your doctor has requested that your stool be analyzed in the Laboratory. The analysis will determine the presence or absence of bacteria or parasites capable of causing gastro-intestinal infections. The reliability of this analysis is dependent on good specimen collection and prompt transport to the laboratory.

What to expect:

You may be given a specimen **collection** container (white plastic over-the-toilet bowl specimen container) and a two-vial **transport** system (provided by the Laboratory) to take home with you. Please carefully read and follow the collection instructions listed below. If you do not receive collection/transport containers from the Laboratory or your doctor, please follow the “Alternate Method” on the next page. Final results of testing will be available to your physician within two to four days.

Collection Instructions for Two Vial Transport System:

1. **IMPORTANT: Please read and follow all directions. CAUTION: Solutions are POISONOUS. Do not drink.**
2. Patients should not use antacids, barium, bismuth, anti-diarrheal medication or oily laxatives prior to collection of stool specimens for culture or parasite examination.
3. There are two tubes for specimen transport in the Collection/Transport kit. The tubes contain liquid. ***The liquids are poisonous. Don't drink them. Keep them out of the reach of children.***
4. **Important Specimen Collection Notes:**
 - **DON'T** urinate on the specimen or in the collection container.
 - **DON'T** urinate into the transport tubes.
 - **DON'T** pass the specimen directly into the transport tubes.
 - **DON'T** pass the specimen into the toilet bowl.
 - **DO** collect the specimen as follows:
5. The stool should be passed into a clean **DRY** container. Use the white plastic over-the-toilet bowl specimen collector, a bed pan, a clean margarine tub, clean wide-mouthed jar, a clean milk carton, or plastic wrap placed over the toilet bowl to catch the specimen.
6. Open each tube containing the liquid. Using the collection spoon built into the lid of the tube, place small scoops of stool from areas which appear bloody, slimy or watery into each tube until the liquid contents of

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- the tube rises to the red line. If the stool is formed (hard), please try to sample small amounts from each end and the middle of the stool.
7. Mix the contents of each tube with the spoon, then twist the cap tightly closed and shake the tube vigorously until the contents are well-mixed. **Check the caps to be certain they are tightly closed.**
 8. Maintain the transport tubes at room temperature until delivery to the Hospital.
 9. Mark each tube label with the identification information requested, including the patient's full name, date of birth, and the date and time of collection. Also check the box on the tube label which looks most like the specimen when collected. Replace both tubes in the zip-lock bag, and bring specimen to the Hospital as soon as possible (within four hours is optimal). If the specimen is produced in the evening, it is acceptable to delivery it the Hospital the next morning. Do not refrigerate the specimen. Be sure that you have put the appropriate amount of stool specimen into each of the two tubes.
 10. Wash your hands thoroughly after specimen collection. If any liquid from the transport tubes gets on your skin or in your eyes, flush with plenty of running water. If irritation develops, consult a physician.

ANTIDOTE IF SWALLOWED: Dilute by drinking two to four glasses of water. Immediately contact an emergency facility, poison information center, or a physician to receive medical attention. Save the transport tube; label information will be helpful for determining appropriate medical treatment.

Alternate Method:

1. Stool may be submitted in any container providing it is **CLEAN, DRY** and has a **TIGHT-FITTING LID.**
2. The stool may be passed directly into a clean, dry container such as a clean margarine tub, clean wide-mouthed jar, or plastic wrap placed over the toilet bowl to catch the specimen. Do not allow urine or toilet bowl water to contaminate the specimen. Transfer the specimen to a clean, dry container with a tight-fitting lid for transport to the Hospital.
3. Ensure that the specimen container is tightly sealed.
4. Label the container with patient's full name, date of birth; and the date and time of specimen collection.

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5. Do not refrigerate. Transport to the hospital as soon as possible (within four hours is optimal). Extended transport time may not yield reliable test results.
6. If the specimen cannot be delivered to the Laboratory within 2 hours of collection, maintain the specimen in the refrigerator. If refrigerated the specimen is stable for 5 days.

Orders for Both Blood Work and Stool Tests:

1. If you come to the Laboratory, and you have orders for both blood and stool tests, your blood will be collected on the day you first present in the Outpatient Lab or Patient Service Center.
2. You will be given the supplies to collect your stool specimen at home, along with instructions. Once you have collected your stool specimen please place the transport vial containing the specimen in the zippered pouch of the bag.
3. If you return to the Hospital to drop off the specimen, please stop at Central Registration to update your registration. If you return to the Patient Service Center, proceed to the lab reception desk.
4. After registration at the Hospital, proceed to the Outpatient Lab. You will be asked to complete a “drop-off form.”
5. If you have not labeled your specimen, you will be asked to do so at this time. Once all requirements are met, you may turn the specimens over to the person at the Outpatient Lab or Patient Service Center reception desk.

Where to go: Central Registration at Evanston, Glenbrook, Highland Park or Skokie Hospitals or a Patient Service Center. Bring your specimen and additionally, you will be asked to provide a physician order if not already in the electronic health record and billing/insurance information.

Who to call if you have questions: If you have questions or would like additional information, ***if you have*** please call Microbiology Laboratory at Evanston Hospital at (847) 570-2733.