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Laboratory - 24, 48, or 72-Hour Stool Collection

Description: Your physician has requested that you collect stool for testing as part of your care. Important health decisions depend on the results of your stool test. *The test must include the entire stool you pass during the collection period* specified by your physician. Otherwise, the test will be inaccurate.

What to expect: You will be given one or more stool collection containers (provided by the laboratory) to bring home with you to collect your stool specimen. Please follow the collection instructions carefully.

What to do:

1. Pre-Testing Instructions:
 - a. If your stool will be tested for fat, follow any special instructions for your diet given by your physician. Start the diet at least 72 hours before you begin collecting your stool.
 - b. For three days prior to and during the collection period:
 - You should be on a fat-controlled diet (100-150 g fat per day).
 - No laxatives (particularly mineral or castor oils).
 - No synthetic fat substitutes (i.e., Olestra or fat-blocking nutritional supplements).
 - c. Barium interferes with the test procedure. Stool collection should not start until 48 hours after a barium enema.
2. Fill/Stool Collection Instructions:
 - a. Lift the toilet seat, and place the toilet adapter across the rim of the toilet bowl. Place the adapter so that the shorter support lies across the rear of the toilet bowl and the longer support lies across the middle of the toilet bowl.
 - b. Unscrew the cap from the collection container. Place the container in the hole of the toilet adapter.
 - c. Put the toilet seat down. The bottom of the container should be in the water or just above it. Depending on the water level in the toilet and the shape of the toilet seat, the collection container may float and rise. As you sit, align the container to be sure your stool goes into the container.

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- d. Mark each container labeled with the identification information requested, including patients full name, date of birth and the date and time of collection. Continue to add stool to the container until it reaches the fill line or the collection time is completed. You may need to use multiple containers.
- e. After your bowel movement, remove the container from the toilet. Screw the cap onto the container and wipe the outside of the container dry.
- f. Keep the stool specimen cold or frozen until delivery to the laboratory.
- g. When your collection is complete, make sure you have screwed the cap evenly and tightly onto the collection container. Discard the toilet adapter.
- h. Complete all of the requested information on the stool container label.
- i. Place the capped container inside a plastic bag and seal the bag.
- j. Transport the specimen to the hospital laboratory as soon as possible (within 24 hours).

Where to go:

Central Registration at Evanston, Glenbrook, Highland Park or Skokie Hospitals. 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 NorthShore Lab Services (NSLS) at (847) 663-2100.