Health Care

LAB TEST INSTRUCTIONS

How to Collect a Stool Sample

Your provider has asked for a stool (poop) sample. Follow these steps to collect it at home.

Before you start

Some containers have a liquid inside. **Do not pour it out.** You will put your sample into the liquid.

Do not use the container if the liquid looks cloudy or yellow, or if it is past the expiration date.

Keep it away from heat, flames, children, and pets.

What you need

The specimen container (the lid has a small spoon)

A shallow pan, plastic bag, or plastic wrap

A pen or marker that will not smear

A zip-close bag

1 Open the container
Unscrew the lid and set it aside.

2 Set up your catch
Use a clean shallow pan, plastic bag, or clear plastic wrap.

3 Collect the stool
Do not let it mix with water or urine.

4 Scoop a sample
Use the spoon on the lid. Scoop from any bloody, slimy, or watery spots. If the stool is hard, scoop from both ends and the middle.

5 Fill the container
Do not overfill. If the stool is liquid, add about the size of a walnut.

6 Close the lid tightly
Make sure it is shut all the way.

7 Label the container
Write your full name, date of birth, and the date and time you collected it. Use a pen or marker that will not run when wet.

8 Bag it
Put the container in a zip-close bag and seal it.

9 Keep it cold
Store the bag in the refrigerator until you return it.

Testing for more than one thing? You can use the same bowel movement. Repeat the steps for each container.

48 HOURS

Returning your sample

Bring it to the clinic or provider who ordered the test. Return it the same day if you can. If not, keep it in the refrigerator. **You must return it within 48 hours** of collecting it.