

Stool collection for occult blood

Instructions for our patients

Your doctor has ordered a laboratory test, which requires that you collect a stool sample. You can help ensure the accuracy of this test by following these instructions.

Important: Read all instructions before beginning the collection process.

Collection precautions

To ensure proper specimen collection and to avoid having to repeat the test:

- Do not wrap specimen in absorbent material (such as toilet paper), which may absorb organisms your doctor needs to identify.
- If your doctor has ordered multiple specimens, collect one every two or three days. No more than one per day.
- Make sure the specimens are labeled with your name, date and time of collection.

Collection of a specimen from an infant

Do not submit a specimen that has been in direct contact with a diaper. Place the peds-bag on the child to prevent urine from coming into contact with the stool specimen. It is best to line the diaper with plastic wrap to avoid absorption. You may then lift the specimen out of the diaper in the plastic wrap and place it in the appropriate container(s) as instructed.

Contact information

If you do not understand these instructions or you have questions, please call one of the laboratories listed below. All laboratories are normally open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center
(541) 768-5059

Samaritan Albany General Hospital
(541) 812-4150

Samaritan Lebanon Community Hospital
(541) 451-7135

Samaritan North Lincoln Hospital
(541) 996-7176

Samaritan Pacific Communities Hospital
(541) 574-1812

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Preparing for the collection

Please consult your doctor if the following instructions might cause a problem.

Certain foods, vitamins and drugs have the potential to alter or affect the results of your occult blood sample. Therefore, before collecting stool specimens for occult blood, you should discontinue taking the following:

- Salicylates (aspirin), steroids and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs should be avoided seven days before and during testing. They may irritate mucosa and cause bleeding. Acetaminophen (Tylenol or equivalent) is allowed.
- Vitamin C in excess of 250 mg a day (from all sources—dietary and supplemental) should be avoided for three days before and during testing. Be aware that iron supplements contain vitamin C, which may cause you to exceed the 250 mg limit.
- Red meat, including beef, lamb, processed meats and liver, should not be eaten for at least 48 hours before the test.
- Raw fruits and vegetables, especially melons, radishes, turnips and horseradish, should be avoided. They can produce false-positives.

You may want to increase other forms of roughage, such as whole grains and cooked vegetables in your diet. These substances can increase test accuracy and they may help uncover “silent” lesions, which bleed intermittently.

Collection instructions

Do not collect samples during, or until three days after, your menstrual period, or while you have bleeding hemorrhoids or have blood in your urine.

For your convenience, you can wait until completing all collections before returning them to the laboratory for examination.

1. Pass urine into toilet.
2. Place “hat” on the rim of the toilet and pass stool into the “hat.”
3. Open the front flap of the hemoccult card.
4. Using the sticks provided, select a portion of the stool and apply it to one of the test areas on the card.
Using another stick, select another portion of the stool and apply it to the other test area on the card.
5. Close the cover flap and keep it closed when not in use.
6. Discard the “hat” and its contents, unless it is needed for other stool procedures.
7. Label hemoccult cards with your name, date and time of collection.
8. Once complete, return cards to laboratory for testing within two days.