

**Patient
Information**

How to collect a stool sample for Faecal Calprotectin analysis

Introduction

This leaflet is intended for patients who have been asked to collect a stool (faecal) sample for the analysis of faecal calprotectin.

What is faecal calprotectin?

Calprotectin is a stool test that is used to detect inflammation in the intestines. Intestinal inflammation is mainly linked with Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) and with some bacterial infections. The level of faecal calprotectin corresponds with disease activity and severity. The faecal calprotectin test will not tell us the cause of your problems but may be helpful in telling us whether it is IBD or a non-inflammatory disorder. The test can also be used to monitor IBD disease activity.

Before collecting your sample

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as aspirin or ibuprofen, should be stopped for 4 weeks prior to collecting your sample. If you are taking NSAIDs or are unsure whether the medication you take is an NSAID please consult your GP before stopping the medication.

For your sample collection you will need:

- A blue top specimen container (this will be provided by the requesting doctor).
- A clean disposable container such as an empty ice cream tub, other plastic food container or cling film.
- A request form and sample bag (this will be provided by the requesting doctor).

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Instructions for collecting your stool sample

Label the blue top specimen container with your name, date of birth and the date and time of the stool sample collection. If possible, please collect the sample from the first bowel movement of the day.

Place your disposable container into the toilet bowl and pass the stool into this, try to make sure that the stool does not touch the inside of the toilet. Alternatively lift the toilet seat and place cling film over the toilet bowl, leaving a slight dip in the centre. Place the toilet seat down and pass the stool onto the cling film.

It is important that urine or water from the toilet is not collected with the stool sample.

Scoop some of the stool into the specimen container using the spatula attached to the lid. Try to avoid any areas of the stool that contain food remains or mucous.

Ideally the specimen container should be one quarter full. If this is not possible, a large pea sized amount is the minimum needed for testing.

Screw the lid on tightly and put the specimen container into the sample bag and seal. Please make sure that the completed request form is attached to the sample bag.

Discard the rest of the stool in the toilet. Place the disposable container and/or cling film and anything else used to collect the sample into a plastic bag, tie securely and put straight into the dust-bin.

Wash your hands thoroughly.

Return your sample

Please take your sample, within 24 hours of collection, to your GP's surgery or the Pathology Department at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital or Cheltenham General Hospital. The departments are open between 8:30am and 5:00pm on weekdays.

Results

Results should be available within 2 weeks. They are sent directly to the requesting doctor.

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Contacts

If you have any questions about collecting your stool sample please contact:

Department of Clinical Biochemistry

Tel: 0300 422 5231

Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm

Further information

If you would like to know more about this test you can visit the website for Lab Tests online. This is a free resource created and updated by laboratory professionals for patients, their carer's and health professionals.

Lab Test Online

Website: www.labtestsonline.org.uk

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