

APPENDIX 9: Stool Testing Instructions for Patients

(Courtesy of safefood)

What to do if your GP has asked you for a stool sample.

A stool test is often used to investigate diarrhoea and other gut problems. To collect the stool (bowel motion) specimen, follow the instructions below. It is important to follow the instructions carefully to give the laboratory and your doctor the best chance of finding out what is wrong.

1. First write your or the patient's name and date of birth, and the date and time of collection on the specimen jar prior to use. Check that these details match those on the laboratory request form.
2. The best way to collect the stool specimen is by placing a large clean disposable container, e.g. an empty ice cream or take-away container, cardboard kidney dish, inside the toilet bowl. The container does not have to be sterile but must be clean and dry.
3. Pass the stool into the container. Plastic wrap can be used to line the nappy of an infant.
4. Using the small scoop attached to the lid of the specimen jar or spatula provided, collect some of the stool from the container and transfer it to the jar. Be careful not to get any on the outside of the jar. You only need a small amount i.e. half-filling the jar is enough.
5. Screw the lid on tightly.
6. Put the jar into a plastic bag and make sure the bag is sealed.
7. Keep in a cool place but not in the fridge or near food.
8. Carefully dispose of soiled container in a sealed plastic bag.
9. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
10. Your doctor will tell you what to do with the sample so that it can be sent to the lab as soon as possible.
11. Ensure you have made an arrangement with your doctor about getting the result of your test. This will take 48-72 hours.



Sample Jar

Take Sample

Bag Sample

Wash Hands