

# A Patient's Guide to Stool Specimen Collection

## Please follow these steps to collect an accurate specimen:

1. You can collect a stool specimen at any time unless:
  - a. You are taking medicine for diarrhea or constipation.
  - b. You have had a barium X-ray.

You must wait 7 days after you stop taking these medicines or after your barium x-ray before you give a specimen.

2. Collect the stool specimen in the container given to you that fits on the rim of the toilet.
3. Transfer the specimen to the transport container. Be sure to Use the container given to you.

If you were not given a container, call the lab for instructions.

Bronson Methodist Hospital Laboratory at (269) 341-6440 or  
Bronson LakeView Hospital Laboratory at (269) 657-1430 or  
Bronson Vicksburg Outpatient Center Laboratory at (269) 649-9126

4. Do not mix water from the toilet bowl or urine with the specimen. This will spoil the test.
5. Label the container with:
  - Patient's first and last name
  - Date of birth
  - Date of the collection
  - Time of the collection
6. If the test is for "stool culture x 3", collect stool on three separate days. Use a new container for each day.
7. Take the specimen to the lab within the time frames listed below.

## Patients in diapers:

Stool specimens for Culture and Sensitivity or Ova and Parasite tests cannot be collected directly from the diaper. The detergents, perfumes and urine from the diaper will spoil the test. **DO NOT SEND IN THE DIAPER.**

1. Line the diaper with plastic wrap.
2. Remove the diaper within 30 minutes after the bowel movement. Place stool into each of the containers provided. Do not over fill the containers.
3. Label the container as directed above.

For infants, apply the Urine Collection bag (U-Bag) to the patient so that urine cannot spoil the test. Follow the instructions that come with the U Bag. Discard the urine in the U-Bag without splashing onto the stool.

## How and when to collect the specimen

Check for test	For this test	How to collect the specimen.	When to hand in the specimen.
	C. difficile toxin assay	Use a clean, dry container.	Within 5 days of collection. Must be refrigerated.
	Fecal Occult Blood	Use Fecal Occult Blood Collection Kit.	Mail immediately or return to lab within 5 days of collection.
	Fecal WBCs (Fecal Lactoferrin)	Use a clean, dry container.	Within 72 hours of collection. Keep either at room temperature or refrigerated.
	H Pylori	Use a clean, dry container.	Within 72 hours of collection. Must be refrigerated.
	Ova & Parasites (O&P)	Use Prototfix CLR Collection Vial. Fill to line on container.	Within 72 hours of collection. Room temperature.
	pH/reducing substance	Use a clean, dry container.	Within 24 hours of collection. Must be refrigerated.
	Rotavirus	Use a clean, dry container or on a swab*.	Within 48 hours of collection. Must be refrigerated.
	Stool culture, routine	On a swab*	Within 72 hours of collection. Must be refrigerated.
		Or in an orange-capped container with pink liquid preservative. Fill to line on container.	Within 72 hours of collection. Keep at room temperature.

**\* If both the rotavirus and stool culture are ordered, collect two swabs.**

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