

Faecal Calprotectin Sample Collection

This leaflet gives you information on how to collect a stool (faecal) sample so it can be tested for faecal calprotectin.

Why am I undertaking this test?

Your GP has asked you to provide a sample of your stool (faeces) to be tested for faecal calprotectin (FCP). This test is an easy, non-invasive test which will help your GP to differentiate between inflammatory and non-inflammatory bowel disorders. If you have any queries regarding the test please speak to your doctor or contact the Clinical Biochemistry & Immunology department (details below).

What does the test involve?

The test involves collecting a sample of stool into the provided container. The laboratory will then measure a substance called calprotectin and send the results to your GP.

Is there anything I need to do before I collect the sample?

Unfortunately, some drugs can affect the faecal calprotectin result, especially painkillers such as Ibuprofen, Naproxen or Diclofenac (or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, NSAIDS). If you are taking any of these medications you need to stop taking them for 4 weeks before you do the test (after consultation with your doctor).

Smoking and the consumption of alcohol should also be avoided for a minimum of 24 hours prior to the collection of the sample as these may also affect the faecal calprotectin results.

How do I collect the stool sample?

You have been given a small plastic collection pot to collect the sample in. It is important that the bowel motion you take the sample from has not been in the toilet bowl, as any water or urine present could affect the test result. If you need to urinate (pee), do this first, and then collect the stool sample. It is also important that the sample does not come into contact with any toilet cleaner or freshener products. To collect a stool sample:

- Label the container with your name, date of birth and the date.
- Wear disposable rubber or plastic gloves.
- Place something in the toilet to catch the stool, such as a potty or an empty plastic food container, or spread clean newspaper or plastic wrap over the rim of the toilet.
- Make sure the sample doesn't touch the inside of the toilet.
- Place the sample in the clean screw-top container and screw the lid shut. A sample of at least 2cm / 1 inch across is required (about the size of a small walnut). It is important that sufficient sample is provided; otherwise the test may not be able to be completed. However do not over fill the container.
- Put the gloves and anything else you used to collect the sample in a plastic bag, tie it up and put it the bin.
- Wash your hands thoroughly.

Ideally the sample should be collected from the first bowel motion of the day.

The sample must be returned to your GP or hospital **within 3 days** of collection otherwise it may be spoilt and cannot be tested.

How do I store the sample once collected?

Once sealed in the collection pot the sample should be stored at room temperature out of direct sunlight and away from food and drink. The sample **must not** be stored in a refrigerator at any time. The collection should be returned to your GP surgery or hospital as soon as possible after collection to avoid it being spoilt.

Where do I take the collection?

Return the collection to your doctor's surgery or hospital, who will ensure it is sent to the laboratory. Please ensure that:

- You have completed your **name, date of birth** and **date of collection** on the sample pot.
- The request form from your doctor must accompany the collection. If your doctor has not given you a request form, please obtain one before collecting the sample.

What happens if I don't complete the information on the collection bottle, or don't send an accompanying request form?

This could cause significant delays in the processing of your sample, and you may be asked to repeat the collection, so please follow the instructions above.

When will the results be available?

Your doctor will be issued with a report of your results. This will take up to two weeks.

Contact Details

For more information on this test, please contact your doctor, or the Clinical Biochemistry and Immunology Department at Peterborough City Hospital,
Telephone: 01733 678454.

Peterborough City Hospital, Edith Cavell Campus, Bretton Gate, Peterborough, PE3 9GZ

Reference number: CS176

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Review date: February 2026