Collecting a Stool (Faecal) Sample to test for Elastase or Calprotectin

Preparation

No dietary restrictions are needed. You do not have to stop taking any medicine you have been given before collecting this sample.

If you plan to return the sample by post, it is better to collect the stool (faecal) sample at the beginning of the week rather than the end, so that it is not sitting in the post over a weekend.

Make sure that the blue-capped sample tube has a label showing a barcode and your name, hospital number and date of birth. If this label is missing, please telephone the IBD Nurse Specialists on (0161) 276 4168. The date at the bottom of the label is that when you were given the tube. Please change this to the date the sample was collected, if this is different.

Collection of the stool sample

Wear the disposable gloves provided.

The stool sample must not be allowed to come into contact either with urine or with water from the toilet bowl. The sample can be taken from a stool on the side of the toilet above the water-line. Otherwise, catch some stool on toilet paper, which you can then flush away afterwards.

The stool sample can be taken simply and quickly from any **"formed" stool**. Please do **not** take the sample from a mucus-like part or where there are pieces of vegetable matter (for example, fibre or nuts). If you are experiencing diarrhoea, please try to collect a sample when this is improving, but watery samples **will** be accepted by the lab.

Transfer two-three small scoopfuls of the stool into the blue-capped specimen tube using the spoon built into the lid of this tube. Then screw the lid shut.

Put the gloves and anything else you used to collect the sample in a plastic bag, tie it up securely and put it in a waste bin.

Wash your hands thoroughly.

Returning the Sample by Post

The stool sample must reach the laboratory **within 48 hours**. Therefore, if you are returning it by post, it must be sent on the day that it is taken, or the following morning.

The sample must be packed in the following way to comply with mailing regulations:-

- Take the strip of sponge from the white plastic screw-top container and wrap it around the lower part of the specimen tube. Insert this tube in the white container, and screw the lid shut. Then put this container in the box.
- Put the box into the white plastic mailing bag (return address label attached). This postage is prepaid under the Royal Mail "Click and Drop" service, it can be hand delivered to a post office or placed in any post box.

Returning the Sample by Hand

If you wish to return the sample in person, please take it either to the Outpatients clinic suite where you were given it, or to Central Specimen Reception on the ground floor of the Clinical Sciences Centre. If you have a South or Central Manchester GP, you may also return it to the surgery where it can be collected by laboratory transport.

If you have any queries, please telephone (0161) 276 4699 (Specialist Biochemistry). The Laboratory is open Monday-Friday 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Incorporating:
Altrincham Hospital • Manchester Royal Eye Hospital • Manchester Royal Infirmary • Royal Manchester Children's Hospital • Saint Mary's Hospital • Trafford General Hospital • University Dental Hospital of Manchester • Wythenshawe Hospital • Withington Community Hospital • Community Services

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE