

Division of Laboratory Medicine

Bacteriology

Ova, Cysts and Parasites

As part of our quality improvements for the Parasitology service within the Microbiology department at MFT, we have outlined the current testing requirements to provide an efficient service for the investigation of ova, cysts and parasites (OCP) from samples other than blood.

Our aim is to clarify the requesting and selection of appropriate enteric samples for the examination of ova, cysts and parasites.

Pathogen	Sample required	Comment
<i>Cryptosporidium parvum/hominis</i> , <i>Giardia lamblia</i> and <i>Entamoeba histolytica</i>	Faeces	<u>There is NO NEED to request OCP</u> All enteric samples for bacteria/parasite PCR will automatically be tested for these.
Other parasitic infestations	3 faecal samples over a period of 10 days	<u>OCP investigation must be requested</u> Samples labelled and dated:- 1of 3, 2of 3 and 3of 3. <u>Information required: -</u> • Foreign travel history • Blood eosinophil count • Duration of diarrhoea • Presence/absence of abdominal symptoms • Evidence of malabsorption • HIV/Immunosuppression
Threadworm. (<i>E. vermicularis</i> ova.)	Dry Peri-anal swab in 2ml saline	Rotate a saline moistened swab around the anus of the child first thing in the morning. <i>Peri-anal kits are supplied from the Enteric Laboratory upon request- Please contact 0161 276 6734.</i>
Bilharzia (<i>Schistosoma haematobium</i>)	Urine	Total urine volume collected between 10am and 2pm. Alternatively a 24hr collection of terminal samples of urine may be obtained.
Microsporidia	Faeces	Modified trichrome is not a test the laboratory performs and is referred to another laboratory. This test should be specifically requested on the request form after discussion with a Microbiologist.
Worms seen in stool	Worm	Please send actual worm seen in a universal container

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If any other types of samples require testing, or other parasite investigations required, please contact the Microbiology department on 0161 276 6717.

If amoebic dysentery is suspected and clinical advice needed, please
 tel 0161 276 6333

On occasions, we may need to refer samples to a reference laboratory for specialised testing procedures and further samples may be necessary. Please see list of tests and referral laboratories (<https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/other-departments/laboratory-medicine/manchester-medical-microbiology-partnership/referral-laboratories/>)

(Last updated November 2025)