

How to Collect a Stool Sample for a *Clostridioides difficile* (C. difficile) Toxin Test

Instructions for Patients

Your doctor has asked you to collect a sample of your stool (poo). We will test this sample for toxins (harmful substances) produced by the C. difficile bacterium. The results will help your doctor diagnose the cause of your diarrhea.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

- Read **ALL** the instructions carefully.
- 5 DAYS BEFORE** collection, **STOP** ALL medicines, laxatives, enemas, anti-diarrheal drugs that contain barium, mineral oil, or magnesium, or antibiotics, if possible, unless otherwise directed by your doctor. You may restart taking these once you finished collecting your sample.

How do I collect a stool sample?

STEP 1. Gather your supplies in the bathroom, within easy reach.

- The **sterile specimen container** that we gave to you.
 - If the specimen container does not have a label with your name on it, clearly print your full legal name (first and last) and your date of birth. Then print the date and time of the collection.
- A **clean, dry, disposable container** (such as a disposable food container) or **plastic wrap**. You will use this to catch your stool before it touches the toilet water.
- A **clean plastic spoon**. You will use this to transfer a sample of your stool from the disposable container or plastic wrap to the sterile specimen container.

STEP 2. Wash your hands with soap and water. Dry thoroughly.

STEP 3. Catch your stool.

It is important that your stool sample does not touch toilet water or urine (pee). If needed, first pee into the toilet and flush.

To catch your stool before it goes into the toilet, you can either:

- Hold a clean dry disposable container under your bum, OR
- Place plastic wrap over the toilet bowl rim. Put the seat down to help hold the plastic wrap in place.

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How do I collect a stool sample? (continued)

STEP 4. Collect your stool sample.

- A. Unscrew the lid of the specimen container. Use the plastic spoon to transfer a small amount of your stool from the disposable container or plastic wrap into the specimen container.
 - Make sure you do not dirty the outside of the specimen container with stool.
 - Your stools should be soft (liquid) or watery like diarrhea. We will not accept formed stool for this test.
- B. Replace the lid and tighten firmly to prevent leaking.
- C. For sanitary reasons, place the specimen container in a sealed plastic bag.
- D. Put your sample in the fridge.

STEP 5. Flush the toilet.

Flush the remainder of the stool down the toilet. Put the plastic spoon, disposable container, and/or plastic wrap in a disposable bag and throw it in the garbage.

STEP 6. Wash your hands with soap and water. Dry thoroughly.

STEP 7. Return your sample.

For the most accurate results, return your stool sample **right away (and no later than 72 hours after collection)** to the **HRH Ambulatory Clinic Laboratory**. We are located on level 1 of the hospital, across from the Central Elevators. We are open Monday to Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Please note: If you cannot return your sample within 72 hours, keep the sample in the fridge until you are able to return it to the Clinic. **Make sure the temperature of your fridge stays between 2°C to 8°C (35.6°F to 46.4°F).**

When will I receive my results?

A report will be sent back to your doctor within 48 hours. When your report is ready, you can view it on myHumberHealth (<https://myhumberhealth.ca>). Please make sure we have your correct email address at registration.