

Stool Collection Guidelines

Your child's stool (bowel movement) must be tested so we can plan the treatment for your child. You will need to collect the stool specimen at home. Bring it to a Laboratory Service Center. This stool specimen will be examined and a report will be sent to your doctor.

You will need

- Clean container
- Wooden tongue depressor or spoon
- "Toilet hat", clean dry container, or plastic wrap (for an older child)
- Label with the child's full legal name and the information in the "How to label the specimen" section, below.
- Latex or vinyl exam gloves (optional)

How to label the specimen

1. Child's full legal name – complete first and last names correctly spelled
2. **One** of the following unique identifiers:
 - Date of Birth
 - Patient's ID or NCH Medical Record Number
3. Date of sample collection (MM/DD/YYYY)
4. Time of sample collection (please include A.M. or P.M.)

NCH Clinics: Clinicians can use an EPIC registration label before giving the container(s) to the patient.

How to collect the specimen

Put on gloves before handling your child's stool. Stool can contain material that spreads infection. Wash your hands after you remove your gloves.

Infants

- After your infant has a bowel movement, collect the stool from the diaper. If your infant is having liquid stool, use a disposable diaper and put the plastic side next to the skin. Leave the diaper on this way just long enough to collect the stool specimen. **The stool must not have any contact with urine.**
- Do not put any lotions or ointments on the infant's diaper or diaper area. Greasy ointments or lotions can cause incorrect results. The only diaper rash treatments that may be used are cornstarch and Resinol.

Toddlers

- If your toddler is toilet trained, collect the stool specimen from a clean, dry, training potty. If your child is not toilet trained, collect the specimen from the training pants or diaper. The stool must not have any contact with urine.
- Do not put any lotions or ointments on the toddler's training pants, diaper, or diaper area. Greasy ointments or lotions can cause incorrect results. The only diaper rash treatments that may be used are cornstarch and Resinol.

Older Children

- You may be given a white plastic "toilet hat" to collect the specimens. Have your child use this container for all bowel movements. When the child is ready to have a bowel movement, place the "toilet hat" on the back rim of the toilet bowl, just under the toilet seat. If using plastic wrap, loosely drape a long section of plastic wrap over the rim on both sides of the toilet bowl creating a "pocket" in the center. Have your child sit directly over the collection container or plastic wrap to collect the stool sample. Do not collect the stool from the toilet. The stool must not have any contact with urine.

How to prepare the specimen

1. Use the wooden tongue depressor or spoon to place the stool in the proper container. (See the Stool Collection Chart on pages 4 and 5.)
2. On the label write your child's full legal name, date of birth, and the date and time he or she had the bowel movement.
3. Bring your child's stool specimen to a Nationwide Children's facility as soon as possible. (Please see the Stool Collection Chart on pages 4 and 5 for exact timing).

Drop-off options

- You may take the specimen to any Laboratory Service Center or Nationwide Children's *Close To Home* Center during regular business hours. For business hours and locations, please call Laboratory Services at (800) 934-6575 or visit NationwideChildrens.org/Lab.
- Nationwide Children's Outpatient Reference Laboratory is located in the lower level at 555 S. 18th Street, Columbus, Ohio 43205. Business hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. and Saturday, 8:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.
- Nationwide Children's Hospital Admitting Department on main campus is open for drop-offs Monday through Friday, 7:00 P.M. through 11:30 P.M.

Please do not drop off stool specimens at the Emergency Department.










Other information

- Collect the specimen even if your child has diarrhea (loose bowels).
- Collect the specimen in the container given to you unless you are given other instructions. Different tests use different containers.
- If you are collecting specimens for more than one child, make sure each specimen container is labeled with the correct child's full legal name and date of birth.
- If you have any questions, be sure to ask your child's doctor or nurse.

For directions to the nearest Laboratory Service Center, please call Laboratory Services at (800) 934-6575 or visit NationwideChildrens.org/Lab.










For more information, please see the Stool Collection chart on pages 4 and 5 of this document.

STOOL COLLECTION CHART

TEST NAME	COLLECTION CONTAINER	CONTAINER PICTURE	COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS	STABILITY *Includes transport and testing time
Adenovirus 40/41 Antigen	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a sterile specimen container ½ teaspoon of stool. No preservatives, swabs, or kits.	Refrigerated - 72 hours Frozen - 1 month
Alpha 1 Antitrypsin Quantitative	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a sterile specimen container a “walnut” size stool sample. No preservative, swabs, or kits.	Room temperature - 24 hours Refrigerated - 7 days Frozen - 3 months
Calprotectin	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a sterile specimen container a “walnut” size stool sample. No preservative, swabs, or kits.	Room temperature - 10 days Refrigerated - 10 days Frozen - 12 months
Clostridium difficile Toxin Test	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a sterile specimen container a “walnut” size stool sample, or if the stool is loose or semi-liquid, collect a ½ teaspoon size sample. No preservative, swabs, or kits.	Room temperature - 24 hours Refrigerated - 5 days Frozen - indefinitely
Culture, Stool	Cary Blair (green capped vial with preservative)		Collect stool in a clean container. Using the collection spork (attached to the cap) put the stool in the vial until the liquid reaches the red line on the label. Mix contents with collection spork or cap tightly and mix by inverting several times until	Stool must be placed in the vial within 2 hours of collection. Stable at room temperature for up to 24 hours once inside the vial or refrigerated for up to 72 hours.
	Culture Swab		Insert swab past the anal sphincter to sample stool. Replace swab fully to release preservative fluid and saturate swab.	Stool is stable at room temperature or refrigerated for up to 24 hours when the swab tip is saturated with stool.
Fecal Fat, Qualitative	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a sterile specimen container a “walnut” size stool sample. No preservative, swabs, or kits.	Refrigerated - 2 weeks Frozen - 2 weeks
Gastrointestinal (GI) Infection Array	Cary Blair (green capped vial with preservative)		Collect stool in a clean container. Using the collection spork (attached to the cap) put the stool in the vial until the liquid reaches the red line on the label. Mix contents with collection spork or cap tightly and mix by inverting several times until	Stool must be placed in the vial within 2 hours of collection. Stable at room temperature for up to 24 hours once inside the vial or refrigerated for up to 72 hours.
Giardia / Cryptosporidium Antigen	O&P Kit (pink & blue capped vials) or Total-Fix (white capped vial) or Cary Blair (green capped vial)		Collect stool in a clean container. Using the spork built into the lid of the vial(s) or wood applicator stick place small samples of stool in the vial(s) until the liquid reaches the black line on the label (red line on the pink, blue or green capped vials). Pay particular attention to the areas that appear bloody or contain a lot of mucus. Mix contents with collection spork or wood applicator stick and cap tightly. Mix by inverting several times until thoroughly mixed	Stool must be placed in the vial within 2 hours of collection. O&P Kit vials (blue & pink caps) • Room temperature - 2 months. • Refrigerated - 2 months Total-Fix vial (white cap) • Room temperature - 2 months. • Refrigerated - 2 months Cary Blair vial (green cap) • Refrigerated - 7 days

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STOOL COLLECTION CHART

TEST NAME	COLLECTION CONTAINER	CONTAINER PICTURE	COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS	STABILITY *Includes transport and testing time
Gram Stain (Stool WBC)	Culture Swab		Insert swab past the anal sphincter to sample stool. Replace swab fully to release preservative fluid and saturate swab.	Stool is stable at room temperature for up to 24 hours when the swab is saturated with stool.
Occult Blood, Stool	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a clean specimen container 1 teaspoon of stool.	Refrigerated - 8 hours
	Hemoccult Cards		Collect stool on Hemoccult card provided by the laboratory or your child's provider's office. (Collect a small, match head-sized sample of stool and using a clean applicator stick, apply a thin smear in box A of the card. Repeat procedure for box B of the card, using a different area of the stool sample. Close the lid of card.)	Room temperature - 14 days (once applied on card)
Helicobacter pylori, Antigen Detection, Stool	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a sterile specimen container ½ teaspoon of stool. No preservatives, swabs, or kits. Do not mix sample with urine.	Refrigerated - 72 hours Frozen - indefinitely
Ova & Parasite (O&P)	O&P Kit (pink & blue capped vials) or Total-Fix (white capped vial)		Collect stool in a clean container. Using the spork built into the lid of the vial(s) or wood applicator stick place small samples of stool in the vial(s) until the liquid reaches the black line (red line on the pink and blue capped vials) on the label. Pay particular attention to the areas that appear bloody or contain a lot of mucus. Mix contents with collection spork or wood applicator stick and cap tightly. Mix by inverting several times until thoroughly mixed.	Stool must be placed in the vial within 2 hours of collection. Stable at room temperature or refrigerated for up to 14 days once inside vials.
Pancreatic Elastase (E ₁), Stool	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a sterile specimen container 1 teaspoon of stool. No preservatives, swabs, or kits. Do not mix sample with urine.	Room temperature - 5 days Refrigerated - 7 days Frozen - 12 months
pH, Stool	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a sterile specimen container ½ teaspoon of loose or semi-liquid stool. No preservatives, swabs, or kits. Do not mix sample with urine.	Frozen - 24 hours
Reducing Substances	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a specimen container ½ teaspoon of very loose or liquid stool. No preservatives, swabs, or kits. Do not mix sample with urine.	Refrigerated - 36 hours Frozen - 7 days
Rotavirus	Sterile Container (blue cap)		Collect in a sterile specimen container 1 teaspoon of loose or semi-liquid stool. No preservatives, swabs, or kits. Do not mix sample with urine.	Refrigerated - 72 hours Frozen - indefinitely

For more information regarding test availability or specimen requirements, please call (800) 934-6575 or visit NationwideChildrens.org/Lab.