

# How to Collect a Stool Sample for a Stool Culture Test

## Instructions for Patients

Your doctor has asked you to collect a sample of your stool (poo). We will test this sample to see what is in your stool (stool culture). The results will help your doctor determine if you have an infection in your digestive tract.

### 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. The container has a plastic spoon attached to the lid.
  - 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.

#### **Caution: The specimen container has a liquid preservative.**

- DO NOT remove the preservative from the container.
- Keep the container upright to prevent it from spilling.
- KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.



- 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.

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

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**English:** This information is important! If you have trouble reading this, ask someone to help you.

**Italian:** Queste informazioni sono importanti! Se ha difficoltà a leggere questo, chiedi aiuto a qualcuno.

**Spanish:** ¡Esta información es importante! Si tiene dificultad en leer esto, pida que alguien le ayude.

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## How do I collect a stool sample? (continued)

### 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.

### STEP 4. Collect your stool sample.

- Unscrew the lid of the specimen container. Use the plastic spoon attached to the lid to transfer samples of your stool from the disposable container or plastic wrap into the specimen container.
  - If present, scoop out samples from bloody, slimy, or watery areas of the stool.
  - If the stool is hard, scoop samples from each end and the middle of the stool.
- Transfer enough of your stool to the specimen container until the liquid reaches the **fill line**.  
**DO NOT OVERFILL.**
- Replace the lid and tighten firmly to prevent leaking.
- Gently shake the container until the stool sample is well mixed with the liquid.
- For sanitary reasons, place the specimen container in a sealed plastic bag.
- 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.

**Within 48 hours of collecting your sample**, return it 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, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### 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.