

Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) Instructions

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH!

SCREENING SAVES LIVES!



Who should be screened for colorectal cancer?

In the United States, we screen all male and female adults for colorectal cancer. The age to start colorectal cancer screening depends on several factors.

- Average-risk individuals (no family history or predisposing conditions) should begin screening at age 45. At UCLA, we screen all average-risk individuals from age 45 to 80.
- Individuals with a family history of colon or rectal cancer or with a predisposing condition for colorectal cancer (for example, Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis) should speak with their doctor about initiating screening early.

Why did my doctor recommend a fecal immunochemical test (FIT)?

Your doctor has recommended that you complete a fecal immunochemical test (also known as "FIT") to screen you for colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer includes both colon and rectal cancer and is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer in both men and women in the United States. But it doesn't have to be. Many colorectal cancers and deaths can be prevented with the use of established screening tests designed to find pre-cancerous polyps and early cancers before they cause symptoms. FIT is one of these tests.

Colon cancer is a leading cause of cancer-related death but is preventable with screening.

How do I complete a FIT kit?



HOW DO I GET A FIT KIT?

You can pick up your FIT kit from your doctor's office or nearest UCLA Health lab.



WHAT IS A FIT?

FIT is one method of screening for colorectal cancer. It is a self-administered test designed to detect small amounts of human blood in the stool that cannot be seen with the naked eye. You can perform this test at home using the materials provided in the kit. The instructions help you collect a small stool sample and place the sample in a protected container. You will then put the container in a mailer (envelope) to send to the UCLA laboratory for processing. If the FIT result is abnormal (or "positive"), there may be blood in your stool and a colonoscopy must be performed to find the source of blood loss.

- You must perform a FIT kit once each and every year to screen effectively for colon cancer.
- Any time a FIT result is abnormal (positive), you will need to have a colonoscopy.



HOW DO I PERFORM A FIT TEST?

If you received your fecal immunochemical test (FIT) kit from UCLA Health, you likely received the Polymedco OC-Auto FIT kit pictured above. Most FIT kits include the following: outer envelope, sampling bottle, collection paper, question and answer brochure, return mailer (envelope), biohazard bag, and absorbent pad.

Regardless of the specific brand of FIT kit you received, the steps required to complete the test are similar. Below are general FIT kit instructions modeled after the Polymedco OC-Auto FIT kit. You can also view the full OC-Auto FIT kit sample collection procedure video here:

uclahealth.org/medical-services/gastro/colon-cancer-screening/stool-screening-test-fit-kit

Please read all FIT kit packet inserts and defer to your specific FIT kit for instructions.

STEP 1. Fill out the information on the sampling bottle.



Write your name, birth date, current date and time on sampling bottle.

STEP 2. Place the collection paper on top of the water in your toilet.



STEP 3. Deposit a stool sample on top of the collection paper.



STEP 4. Open the sampling bottle.



STEP 5. Use the probe to scrape the surface of the stool before the stool touches the water.



Cover the grooved portion of the sample probe completely with stool.

STEP 6. Place the probe with stool sample back in the sampling bottle and close it. Do not reopen it.

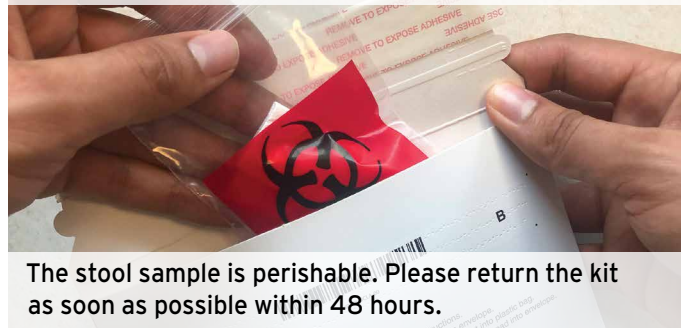


The collection paper is biodegradable and can be flushed.

STEP 7. Wrap the sampling bottle in the small absorbent pad and place it in the biohazard bag.



STEP 8. Seal the biohazard bag and place it in the return mailer envelope.



The stool sample is perishable. Please return the kit as soon as possible within 48 hours.

IMPORTANT Please return the completed kit by mail or in person to your clinic within 48 hours of collecting your sample. The stool sample is perishable.

NEED HELP? Contact your primary care physician.