Stool Sample Collection Instructions

You are receiving this package because your child is due for a stool collection. Please collect the stool sample from your child and return it to us (with the completed form) as soon as possible. Check with your study coordinator about what day to collect the sample specimen. Timing of collection is very important so that samples are not stored more than 3 days in personal freezers prior to reaching the study site.

NOTE: If you also received blood, urine and/or saliva collection materials, please make the appropriate arrangements to collect all samples as close together as possible (same day is preferred). Also keep in mind that blood must be shipped on the same day that it is drawn.

SUPPLIES
Enclosed you will find:
- 3 Black Pre-Labeled Collection Tubes (liquid-containing)
- 3 Clear Pre-Labeled Collection Tubes (empty)
- Stool Collection Device (for ages 2+)
- Styrofoam Sample Shipment Box
- Gloves
- Zip-Lock Specimen Bag
- 2 Sticks (for sample transfer)
- Freezer Pack
- Stool Collection Form (complete and return with sample)

*Use the provided collection devices to avoid contamination of the specimen.

STEPS
NOTE: Siblings and parents will only be donating a stool sample once.

For adults and potty-trained children:
1. Create a workspace on your bathroom counter with paper towels to catch any stool spills. Put on gloves provided in kit.
2. Place the stool collection device onto the toilet following the directions printed on the device.
3. Using the provided transfer sticks, fill the 3 clear tubes with as much stool as you are able to without exceeding the 1.8 ml mark on the side of the tube.
4. Now fill the 3 black tubes (liquid-containing) with a portion of stool that is about the size of a small blueberry or enough to bring the total contents of the tube (stool plus liquid) up to the 1.5 ml mark.
   a. Mix well enough (shake tube if necessary) that the stool sample is completely submerged in liquid.
5. Place all 6 tubes into the provided zip-lock specimen bag and seal.
6. Place in the freezer within 15 minutes of collection, standing upright in the bag. Place the freezer pack separately in the freezer (away from the stool, so the stool freezes quickly). Store in the freezer until the time of shipment or the time of your study appointment.
7. Complete the Stool Collection Form.

For children who are not potty-trained:
1. Follow step 1 above.
2. Collect the stool sample from your child’s diaper immediately after it has been voided.
3. Follow steps 3-7 above.

SHIPPING
Place the zip-lock specimen bag with the stool collection cup in the insulated Styrofoam box, with the freezer pack. Bring/mail to your study site, making sure it stays frozen during transport.

*Stool must be completely frozen before transporting it. Bring/mail to study site within 3 days of collection.

Please see reverse side →
BEST PRACTICES

- Please do not write your child’s name on the collection tubes; tubes should be pre-labeled with a de-identifying study code.
- Do not leave stool at room temperature for more than 15 minutes (before or after collection).
- Do not store the collected stool sample in the freezer for more than 3 days.
- Please plan ahead! Collect stool 1-2 days prior to scheduled blood draw (if applicable) so that it is ready for shipment immediately after blood is drawn.
- Freeze your ice packs (for return shipment of the sample) for a minimum of 24 hours before returning your stool sample by mail. This will ensure that the sample stays frozen during the shipping process.
- Do not ship on Fridays or during the weekend as samples will not reach us in a timely manner and will not remain frozen during this time.
- **If your child’s stools are not solid,** it may be helpful to line the diaper with saran wrap or cotton balls to help absorb or catch the stool sample. With saran wrap, you may dump the collected stool into the collection tubes. With cotton balls, you may squeeze the collected stool into the collection tubes.

QUESTIONS

It is easiest to get in touch with us via email at MGHGEMMA@mgh.harvard.edu. If you have an immediate question, you may also reach Sammy by phone at (617) 643-6918.