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Centre intégré  
de santé  
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du Bas-Saint-Laurent

Québec 

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# User Instructions

## Testing for Parasites in Stool

Clinical Department of Laboratory Medicine

OPTI-DE-003



Your doctor has prescribed a stool analysis for parasites to see if you have a parasitic infection. Analyses may be prescribed for protozoan parasites and helminth parasites (microscopy). Parasite testing can help determine if your digestive system contains amoebae, worms or their eggs, which are responsible for persistent diarrhea, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting lasting several days, blood or mucus in the stools, gas (flatulence) or weight loss.

This brochure explains the steps to follow.

### MATERIALS REQUIRED

- **Note:** The colour of the container/cap is for illustrative purposes only and may change without notice.
- A clean container or plastic wrap (e.g., Saran Wrap) and wooden sticks to collect the stool (one per container).
- A stool container for:

#### Protozoan parasites

Enteric stool transport medium (Cary-Blair)




#### Helminth parasites

SAF container



Québec 

## INSTRUCTIONS

- **WARNING:** The liquid in the container is toxic. Keep out of reach of children. Avoid contact with skin and mucous membranes.
- Do not take laxatives or glycerine suppositories to induce bowel movements, diarrhea medication or antacids in the 24 hours before taking the sample.
-  **However, you should discuss any changes to your medication with your doctor.**
- The stool must not touch your urine, the toilet bowl or the toilet water.
- Patients who wear diapers should collect their stool directly from the diaper.

## SPECIMEN IDENTIFICATION

If not already marked on the container, **clearly** write the following information on the label:

- Your last and first name
- Your personal reference number (medical file number or health insurance number)
- The date and time of sampling

## STORAGE

- Store your samples in a plastic zip-lock bag.
- Keep your:
  - Protozoan parasite samples: in an enteric stool transport medium (Cary-Blair) stored in a **refrigerator (4° C). Do not freeze.**

Helminth parasites: in an SAF container at **room temperature** (can be refrigerated). Do not store for more than 24 hours after taking the sample.

## RETURN OF SAMPLES

- Return your specimens to the place you were instructed to return them, i.e., the specimen collection centre at the hospital, the local point of service (LPS) or another location.
- When returning the samples, remember to bring **your hospital card or RAMQ card** as well as **your prescription, if necessary.**

# Sampling method

## STEPS TO FOLLOW

1. Choose the collection method that works for you:
  - A clean plastic container or aluminum plate, or
  - Plastic wrap: Place one or two layers of plastic wrap (e.g., Saran Wrap) under the toilet seat, leaving a dip in the centre.
2. Open the container and lay the cap inside up without touching the inside of the cap.
3. Use the spoon in the cap or a wooden stick to transfer stool into the container provided.
4. Collect a portion of liquid or soft stool with pus or blood if possible.
5. Keep adding stool to the container until the liquid reaches the black line on the label. **Do not go over the line.**
6. Put the cap back on and close it tightly. Shake to dissolve the stool. If necessary, use the spoon or wooden stick to mix the stool with the liquid.
7. Use a new stick to put a portion of stool in the container if necessary.
8. Flush the remaining stool down the toilet and throw out the container or plastic wrap.
9. Wash your hands.



**REMINDER:** If your doctor has requested two or three specimens, repeat these steps with new containers. Mark the date and time of each sample in the designated area when returning the containers.