

There are several methods to collect a faeces (stool) sample but if you have not been given instructions this method can be used:

Step 1. Label the container with your full name, date of birth and the date.

Step 2. Use a toilet that has been rinsed with hot water (not so hot that you risk cracking the pan).

Step 3. Place a clean wide mouth container (for example empty plastic food container/one-litre ice cream carton, or a potty) in the toilet bowl or place several pieces of toilet tissue on top of the water at the bottom of the toilet.

Step 4. Pass the stool into the potty, plastic container or onto the toilet tissue.

Step 5. Place one spoonful of the stool into the specimen container using the spoon built into the lid of the specimen container.

Step 6. Try not to spill the stool on the outside of the specimen container. If this happens clean the outside of the specimen container with soap and warm water, then wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water and dry.

Step 7. Screw on the top of the specimen container tightly and place it in the bag with the laboratory form attached and seal the bag. Ensure the laboratory form accompanies it.

Step 8. Dispose of the remaining stool in the potty or container into the toilet.

Step 9. If you have used a reusable container such as a potty, clean with your usual toilet cleaner. Ensure the potty is clean and dry before reuse. If you have used a disposable container, wrap these in newspaper then put into a disposable bag and place in your outside bin.

Step 10. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water and dry preferably using an anti-bacterial handwash if available. It is good practice to disinfect the taps after use.

Notes:

- One spoonful is sufficient.
- Make sure you don't collect urine or water (from the toilet) with the stool sample, as these will contaminate it. If you need to urinate, do this first, and then collect the stool sample.
- Do not allow the sample to come into contact with toilet cleaners, bleach or toilet blocks etc.
- If samples are being collected from different members of the family, wash the toilet pan between each one with hot water. This will prevent each sample being contaminated by the others.
- For a child in nappies a spoonful can be collected directly from the nappy.

Source: Health protection Scotland (<http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/resourcedocument.aspx?id=1933>)