

Hemoccult Test



A hemoccult test is done to check if you have any sign of bleeding in your stool. It is a screening test for colon and rectal cancer. You may also hear this test called guaiac or stool for occult blood. This test checks for blood in your stool that you cannot see.

Getting ready to do the test

There are some things you may be asked to do to give more accurate results from this test. Follow the directions of your doctor or nurse.

- For **women**, do not start the test during your menstrual period or during the first three days after the end of your period.
- Do not start testing if you have active bleeding from hemorrhoids or when there is blood in your urine.
- For **7 days before and during the test**, do not take aspirin or medicines that have aspirin in them. If your doctor has told you to take aspirin each day, check with your doctor about stopping it before this test.
- For **3 days before and during the test**, avoid:
 - ▶ Red meat such as beef, lamb and liver, including processed meats.
 - ▶ Raw fruits and vegetables such as turnips, cauliflower, red radishes, broccoli, melons, horseradish and parsnips.
 - ▶ Large amount of Vitamin C - more than 350 milligrams daily

How do I do the test?

You will take samples from **3 different** bowel movements. You will be given an envelope that will have:

- Sticks to collect the stool samples
- 3 slides

Follow these steps to collect the stool samples:

1. Open the tab on the front of the envelope (the green side) in order to read the directions before getting the sample.
2. Use a ballpoint pen to write your name, age and address on the front of each of the 3 slides. Put the slides back in the envelope.
3. Just before you have a bowel movement, remove **slide 1** from the envelope and put the date on the slide.
4. Open the front of **slide 1** and use one of the sticks provided to collect a **small** sample of stool. Put the sample inside **Box A**.

5. Use the same stick to collect a second sample from a different part of the stool. Place this sample in **Box B**.
6. Close the flap over the slide and throw the stick away in the trash.
7. Put the slide in the envelope to store until all 3 samples are collected.
8. Repeat these steps to collect samples for slide 2 and 3.
9. After all the samples are collected, return the samples to your doctor or lab as directed.

How do I know the results of my test?

After a few days, call your doctor's office or the laboratory for your results. If your test is positive, it means you had blood in your sample. Your doctor may recommend some other testing if you have a positive test.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions about your hemocult test.

If you would like more written information, please call the Library for Health Information at (614)293-3707. You can also make the request by e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.

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- ▶ Upon request all patient education handouts are available in other formats for people with special hearing, vision and language needs, call (614) 293-3191.