

How to collect a faecal specimen at home for helicobacter testing.



Examples of specimen containers. You will usually have been given the blue top container.

The sample needs to arrive in the laboratory within a day of collection. Do not collect samples on Friday afternoons as the sample may not get to the laboratory in time.

NB: DO NOT perform stool antigen test within at least 2 weeks of taking Proton pump inhibitors or 4 weeks of antibiotics, as these drugs suppress bacteria and may lead to false negatives

How to collect a stool specimen at home:

Step 1. 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 a clean newspaper or plastic wrap over the toilet seat opening

Step 2. Pass the stool into the potty, plastic container or onto newspaper or plastic wrap.

Step 3. Place small scoopfuls of the stool into the specimen container using the spoon built into the lid of the specimen container To perform the tests we only need about a grape sized amount of stool. Do not overfill the specimen container.

The blue container in the picture shows an example of enough stool for the tests.

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 5. Put on the specimen container lid and screw on tightly. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water and dry.

Step 6. Dispose of the remaining stool in the potty, plastic container or newspaper into the toilet.

Step 7. 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 plastic wrap, newspaper or a disposable container, wrap these in newspaper then put into a disposable bag and place in your outside bin.

Step 8. Place the specimen container in the plastic bag attached to the specimen request form and make sure the bag is properly sealed.

Step 9. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water and dry.

Step 10. Deliver to the practice on the same day.