Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

How to Do a Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)

This resource explains how to do a fecal immunochemical (FEE-kul IH-myoo-noh-KEH-mih-kul) test (FIT). A FIT is a test used to check your stool (poop) for blood.

About FIT

A FIT is a test used to check your stool (poop) for blood. There are many reasons you may have blood in your stool. Your healthcare provider will talk to you about why you're having the test.

Getting ready for your FIT

You do not need to avoid any foods or medicines before your FIT.

Do not collect stool samples for your FIT if:

- Your test card is expired, damaged, or dirty. Check the expiration date on your test card before collecting your stool sample.
- You have hemorrhoids (swollen veins in your anus) that are bleeding.
- You have blood in your urine (pee) or you see blood in the toilet bowl. If you see blood, call your healthcare provider.
- You have your period, had your period in the past 3 days, or are expecting your period.
- You have cuts on your hands that are bleeding.

Toilet cleaners or chemicals may affect the results of your FIT. If you have these in your toilet bowl or tank, take them out. Then, flush the toilet 2 to 3 times.

How to collect your stool sample

Gather your supplies in the bathroom where you can reach them easily. You'll need your:

- Test card
- Brush kit with 2 brushes and 1 waste bag
- Specimen bag
- Return envelope
- Label
- Trash can

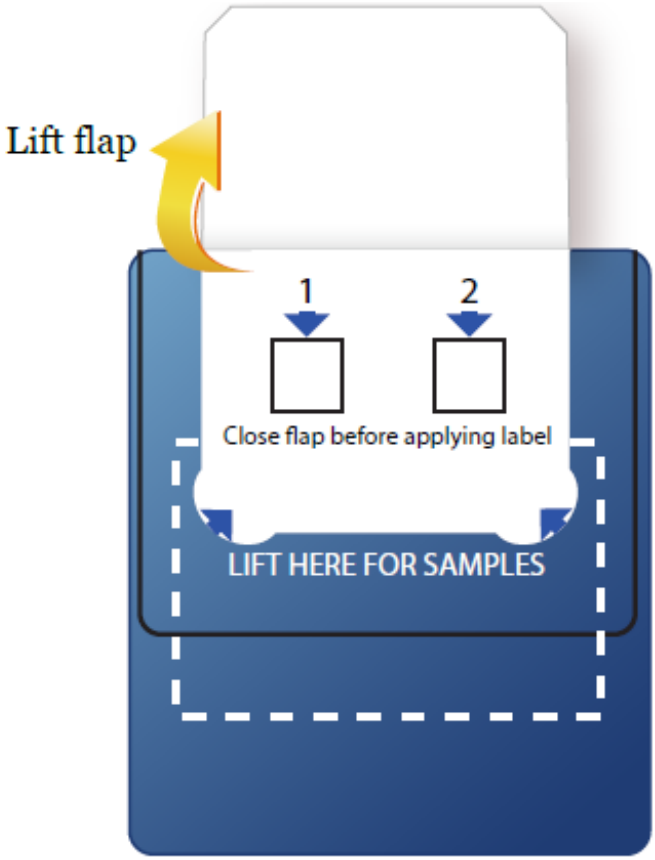

Figure 1. Lift the flap on your test card

Follow these steps to collect your stool sample and do your FIT:

1. Flush the toilet 2 to 3 times before you collect your sample.
2. Sit on the toilet to have a bowel movement (poop) as usual. Do not flush the toilet after your bowel movement.
3. Lift the front flap of your test card. You will see 2 white squares labeled “1” and “2” (see Figure 1).
4. Gently brush the surface of your stool with one of the brushes from your brush kit (see Figure 2). Do this for about for about 5 seconds. If your stool is loose, stir the water around the stool with your brush for 5 seconds.

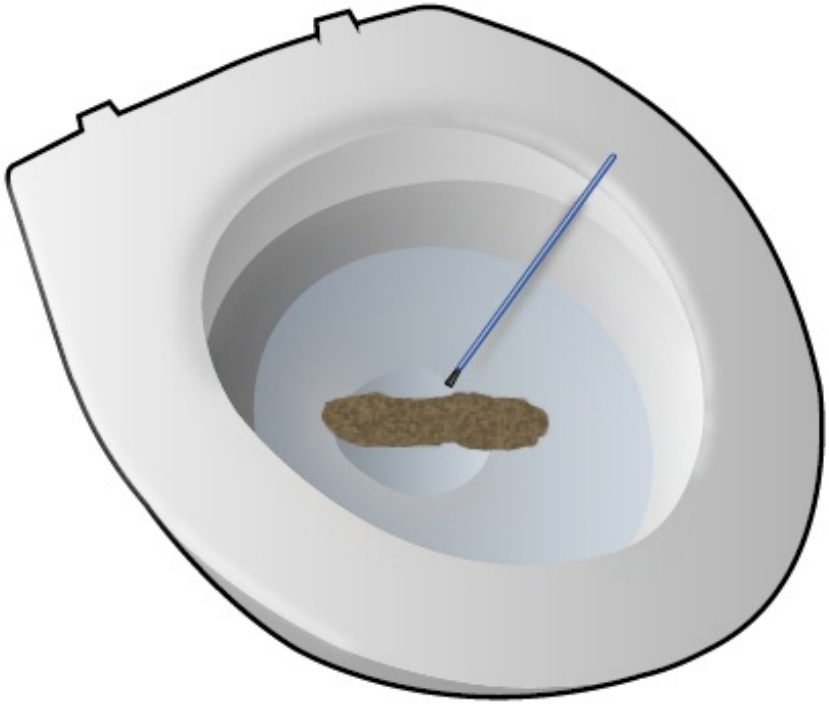

Figure 2. Brush the surface of your stool

5. Take the brush out of the water. Gently shake it over the toilet to remove extra water and any clumps of stool.
6. Rub the brush inside the square marked “1” on your test card (see Figure 3). Then place the brush in the waste bag.

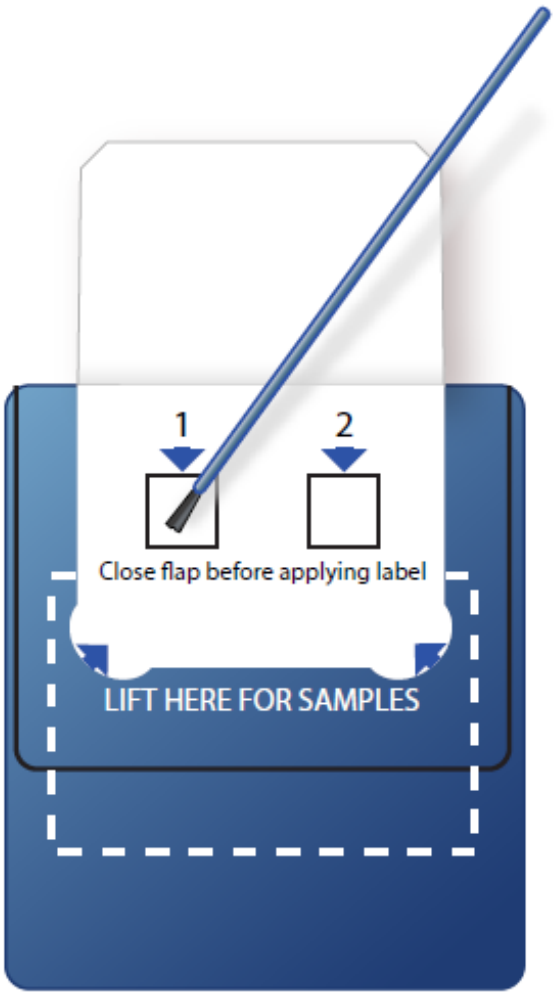

Figure 3. Rub the brush inside the square marked “1”

7. Using the other brush, repeat steps 4 and 5. Then, rub the brush inside the square marked “2” on your test card. Place the brush in the waste bag and throw it away.
8. Flush the toilet.
9. Wash your hands. Wet your hands with warm water, then rub them with soap for at least 20 seconds. Rinse your hands well under warm running water.
10. Close the flap of the test card. Check that the information on the label your healthcare provider gave you is correct. Place the label on the test card within the dotted lines so the flap doesn’t open.
11. Write the date and time of your collection on the label on the specimen bag.
12. Place your test card in the specimen bag. Then, place the specimen bag in the pre-paid envelope your healthcare provider gave you. The mailing

address is on the envelope.

13. Mail the envelope.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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