

Stool Collection
Des Moines
Laboratory

Your physician has requested that your stool be tested.

Before the test

Please read all the information in this brochure before beginning to collect your stool specimen.

Specimen collection instructions

Depending on the tests your physician has requested, you will receive one, two or three different containers. The containers may or may not have liquid in them.

To prevent the stool specimen from falling into the toilet bowl, collect the bowel movement by covering the toilet under the seat with clean newspaper, plastic wrap or a clean plastic bag. Another option is to collect the specimen into a clean wide-mouthed container or bedpan.

Do not allow urine to mix with the stool specimen.

Open all of the containers. Some container lids will have attached spatulas (collection spoons in the cap). Wooden tongue depressors or plastic spoons may be used if a spatula is unavailable.

To fill containers with preservative:

If your stool is hard

- Using the container spoon, add enough stool to bring liquid to “fill to here” line.
- Sample small amounts from each end and the middle of the specimen.
- It is important to sample parts of the stool which appear bloody, slimy or watery.

If your stool is liquid or soft

- Add five spoonfuls of stool to each container.
- It is important to sample parts of the stool which appear bloody, slimy or watery.

Replace all caps and close the container tightly. If there was liquid in the vial, thoroughly mix the specimen by shaking the vial.

Label the specimen containers with:

- Patient last name, first name and birthdate
- Date and time specimen was collected
- Please check the box on the label that best describes the stool. (Formed, loose/soft, watery, bloody)

The rest of the stool may be discarded by flushing it down the toilet.

Please follow your physician’s instructions and deliver specimens to your clinic or to a MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory Patient Service Center. If you need the location or hours of a Patient Service Center near you, please call 515-247-4439.

It is very important that your specimens are labeled and you bring your physician’s orders or a MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory test request with you.

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**If you have questions concerning
where to deliver your specimen,
please call MercyOne Des Moines
Laboratory customer service at
515-247-4439**

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Des Moines Laboratory
1111 6th Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50314

[MercyOne.org/desmoineslab](https://www.mercyone.org/desmoineslab)