

Home testing
Harefield Hospital
Royal Brompton Hospital

How to carry out a faecal (poo) test

This information sheet explains how to carry out a faecal (poo) test. The test involves collecting a poo sample. This is also called a stool sample. It is important to follow these instructions to make sure the test is completed correctly.

Contents of the test kit

- Paper form with information details about you.
- How to carry out a faecal (poo) test leaflet.
- Patient letter asking you to take the test.
- White return envelope labelled UN3373 with a return address label attached and a pre-paid postage sticker.
- Sample pot with spoon or spatula.
- White absorbent material sheet.
- Plastic transport case for sample pot.
- Blue and clear plastic bag marked 'Safety bag'.

Before you start

- Allow about 20 minutes to carry out the faecal test.
- It is important that you post the faecal test sample back to us on the day you carry out the test. So, make sure you have enough time to go to your local post box before you start the test. Try to collect the sample in the earlier part of the week on Monday or Tuesday. This will mean it reaches our laboratory before the weekend.

Collecting a sample

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after taking the sample.

2. To collect the poo sample.

- Place something in the toilet to catch the poo, such as a potty or an empty plastic food container. Or spread clean newspaper or plastic wrap over the rim of the toilet.
- Make sure the poo does not touch the inside of the toilet.
- Use the spoon or spatula that comes with the container to collect the poo.

- Try to fill around a third of the sample container (Picture 1) with poo. Then screw the lid of the container down tightly.



Picture 1

3. Your poo sample should be as fresh as possible. If you cannot post the sample on the same day that it has been collected store your sample in the fridge (inside the sealed plastic safety bag supplied).

4. The sample pot should be placed in the plastic case. The case may have a lining of absorbent material. See picture 2. If the case does not have this material use the small sheet of absorbent material which comes with your test kit. Wrap the material round the sample pot. Place in the wrapped sample pot into the plastic casing. See Picture 3.



Picture 2



Picture 3

5. Close the plastic case and press around the edges to firmly shut the case around the sample. See Picture 4.



Picture 4



Picture 5

6. Place the plastic case with the sample pot inside into the plastic safety bag. See Picture 5. Seal the bag.

7. You will find a paper form in your test kit with information details about you and the test. Write the date and time the poo sample was taken clearly on the form.

8. Place this form and the plastic safety bag containing your sample in the return envelope (marked UN3373). See Picture 6. Seal the bag.



Picture 6

Record your sample

Now submit an online form so we know that your test is on its way to us. You can access the form in 1 of 2 ways:

1. Go to our website www.rbht.nhs.uk
Search for 'Confirmation that your home testing sample has been dispatched'
Fill out the web form that appears on your screen.
2. Or scan the QR code below with your smartphone or tablet to open the web form.



Fill out the form and submit it.

Post your sample

Remember to post the sample back to us on the day you carry out the test. The return envelope should have a postage paid sticker and a label with the address of our laboratories stuck to it. Please check the return envelope has both stickers before you post it. The envelope can be posted into your nearest post box.

More information

See more information on the Home Testing page on Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals' website www.rbht.nhs.uk

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about collecting this sample, please speak to the staff caring for you. Or contact our home testing team:

Home Testing team

Royal Brompton Hospital

Phone 020 7352 8121 extension 88401 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Harefield Hospital

Phone 0330 128 5086, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Was this leaflet useful?

If you have any comments about this information, we'd be happy to hear from you.

email gstt.healthcontent@nhs.net

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please contact the department your appointment is with.

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern about any service or department at Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals. Contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

- Royal Brompton Hospital **phone** 020 7349 7715

- Harefield Hospital **phone** 01895 826 572

Or **email** gstt.rbhh-pals@nhs.net

NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day,

phone 111 **web** www.111.nhs.uk

Become a member of the Trust

Members contribute to Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it's up to you how you get involved. To find out more, **phone** 0800 731 0319 **email** gstt.members@nhs.net or **web** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

Resource number: RBHH new

Last reviewed: November 2025

Next review due: November 2028

© 2025 Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

A list of sources is available on request

Our values: we are **Caring** | **Ambitious** | **Inclusive**