Instructions for Occult Blood Screening

PURPOSE
Assists in the detection of abnormal gastrointestinal bleeding.

WARNING
It is very important to follow these instructions. This test is very sensitive for a special property of blood (peroxidase activity). Improper preparation, collection and storage can result in an incorrect test result. Incorrect test results can cause an important medical problem to be missed or the ordering of further, unnecessary tests.

PREPARATION
It is best to go on a high-fiber diet starting two days before and continuing through the test period.

Diet may include
- Meats - Only small amounts of well-cooked chicken, turkey and tuna.
- Vegetables - Generous amounts of both raw and cooked vegetables, including lettuce, corn, spinach, carrots and celery. Avoid the raw vegetables listed below.
- Fruits - Plenty of fruits, especially prunes and apples.
- Cereals - Bran and bran-containing cereals.
- Moderate amounts of peanuts and popcorn.

Avoid
- Meats - Diet should not include any red or rare meat (no pork, veal, lamb, fish, or beef) for three days prior to the test.
- Avoid cranberries, turnips, horseradish, broccoli, cauliflower, cantaloupe, parsnip, wasabe, and red radishes.

Medications
- For seven days prior to and during testing, do not take medications which can cause gastrointestinal bleeding: aspirin, ibuprofen or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications; steroids; and reserpine. Acetaminophen is permitted. Vitamin C over 250mg per day should be avoided for 2 days prior to tests.
- Do not use rectal medications, tonics, enemas, or receive rectal penetration for two days prior to testing.

Alcohol
- Heavy alcohol consumption should always be avoided, and may interfere with the results of this test by causing gastritis (inflammation of the stomach).
- Discontinue use for seven days prior to and during the test period.

Menstrual Cycle
- If you are having your period, wait for three days after the bleeding has stopped.

Dental Procedures
- Avoid collecting the sample(s) within three days of dental procedures or if your gums are bleeding.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION
- Wash your hands prior to collection.
- Remove all cleansers and deodorizers from the toilet. Flush to remove chemicals.
- Using the applicators provided, obtain a small sample of stool from the toilet bowl. It is very important that the stool specimen be applied as a very thin smear to the test slides.
- Obtain a second sample of the stool, from a different location, in the same manner.
- Apply a very thin smear to the slide. Complete the information requested on each slide.
- Repeat this procedure on two subsequent days. Store the specimens at room temperature.
After collecting your 3 specimens:

- Make sure each slide is labeled with the requested information
- Put the specimen slides in the enclosed biohazard bag
- Place the biohazard bag in the brown envelope
- Put your name and UIN # on the outside of the brown envelope
- Take completed slides to McKinley lab within 5 days.

References

*UpToDate* web site, [www.uptodate.com](http://www.uptodate.com), 2010

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If you are a registered University of Illinois student and you have questions or concerns, or need to make an appointment, please call: **Dial-A-Nurse at 333-2700**

If you are concerned about any difference in your treatment plan and the information in this handout, you are advised to contact your health care provider.

Visit the McKinley Health Center Web site at: [http://www.mckinley.illinois.edu](http://www.mckinley.illinois.edu)