

Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT)

What is a FOBT?

A Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) is an at-home test that looks for hidden blood in your stool. A FOBT is used to check for colon cancer.



Test kits:

There are different types of FOBT kits. Ask your doctor what kit may be best for you.

Stool Guaiac Cards:

- This is the most frequently used test kit. Stool is put on three cards and read at home or in a lab.

Other types:

- Some kits come with a special cloth to wipe after a bowel movement. The cloth is then tested for blood in the stool.
- Some kits have a special test pad that you put in the toilet. The pad will change color if there is blood in the stool.

How to get ready for the test:

Three days before the test do NOT eat:

- Red or rare meat
- Turnips
- Beets
- Radishes
- Horseradish
- Artichokes
- Mushrooms
- Broccoli
- Bean sprouts
- Cauliflower
- Apples
- Oranges
- Bananas
- Grapes
- Melon



These foods can change the results of your test.

Three days before the test do NOT use:

- Iron supplements
- Aspirin (or Aspirin products)
- Vitamin C supplements

Do NOT test your stool if:

- You are having your menstrual period
- You have active bleeding from hemorrhoids
- The stool sample touched the toilet bowl, urine, or toilet cleaning products

Be sure you have your FOBT kit and read the directions that come with the kit.

Every kit is different. Follow the directions that come with the kit.

- **Read all instructions before starting the test!**
- Check the expiration date on the package. Do not use the kit if it is expired.
- Store the kit as needed. It may need to be stored in the refrigerator.
- Make sure you do all the steps in order. Do not skip steps!
- If a step in the test needs to be timed, use a watch. Do not guess.
- Record the results clearly so you can talk about them with your health care provider.



How the test is done:

The test takes three days. You will get three small stool samples. One sample each day.

Your test may have these steps:

1. You will use a cup from the kit to collect your stool. It is important that you catch it before it touches the toilet or urine.
2. You will use the spatula or brush that comes with your kit to collect a small amount of stool. Take pieces from different areas of the stool.
3. You will then put the stool on a card and store it in an envelope overnight to dry.
4. Flush the rest of the stool down the toilet.
5. Follow these steps for the next two days.
6. Once you have your three samples, you will read the results or have them sent to a lab.



Results:

You can read the results for some FOBT kits. Others tests are sent to a lab.

If you have abnormal results, contact your health care provider right away. You may need a colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy test. These are tests that use a camera to look inside the large intestine.

****If you are color blind, have someone else read the test results.**

Normal:	A normal test (no color change) means there was no blood in your stool at the time of the test. Normal test results are
Abnormal:	An abnormal test (blue color change) means there was some blood in your stool at the time of the test. Abnormal

For questions, please call the Utah Cancer Action Network (1-888-222-2542)

References:

- <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/pdq/screening/colorectal/Patient/page3#Keypoint7>
- <http://www.webmd.com/colorectal-cancer/guide/colorectal-cancer-overview-facts>
- <http://www.webmd.com/colorectal-cancer/fecal-occult-blood-test-fobt>

