

Faecal Calprotectin Testing – Guidance for Healthcare Professionals

Changes to sample collection

From October 2025, the process for faecal calprotectin testing at our laboratory is changing as we are moving to patient extracted stool samples for analysis. This is very similar to how samples are collected for the FIT test, so the process is likely to be familiar.

Patients should be asked to collect their sample into a CALEX® tube. This contains a liquid (extraction buffer), which immediately stabilises any calprotectin present in the sample, hence improving the accuracy of the test.

Once received by the laboratory, samples collected in the CALEX® tube can be analysed directly, with minimal laboratory processing.

By moving away from the blue topped stool pots for faecal calprotectin testing, there is also a positive environmental impact due to a reduction in the amount of plastic waste produced.

Surgeries will be provided with starter packs of CALEX® tubes in the coming weeks, after which packs of 10 CALEX® tubes can be ordered via ICE “RUH Services>Path-Other” under the miscellaneous header. CALEX® tubes must be stored between 2-28°C.

Requirements for testing

Please provide each patient with:

1 x Labelled CALEX® tube (*remember to check expiry date on issue to the patient and attach ICE or Millennium sticker with barcode lengthways*)

1 x Patient instructions leaflet

1 x Plastic specimen bag



Please encourage patients to collect their sample from a formed stool and on a day when they can deliver it to the GP practice for transport to the laboratory within 24 hours.

A copy of the patient instructions can be found on our RUH Pathology Website
https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/pathology/blood_test_info/tubelisting.asp?id=508&listing=c

For patients with persistent loose stools

For patients with **known/persistent loose stools** – please provide the patient with a blue top stool pot and instruct them to collect their sample into this as per the previous process.

For any further advice, please contact the Duty Biochemist on 01225 824050 or email ruh-tr.dutybiochemist@nhs.net (Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm)