

## Why Collect a Stool Sample?

A stool (feces) sample can provide valuable information about your illness. Bacteria, viruses, and parasites are expelled in the stool during and after the illness.

Once the stool is tested and the bug is identified, this can inform public health and healthcare providers about the current illnesses that are circulating in Indiana. Knowing what is circulating can direct prevention and education activities, which can lead to fewer people becoming ill.



You are submitting a stool sample to the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) Laboratory for testing. To ensure a thorough understanding of the sample collection process, please read the instructions completely before collection.

The local health department (LHD) will notify you of your results. If you do not plan on collecting a specimen, please return the kit to the LHD.

***Do your part to  
improve public health  
in Indiana!***



Want to watch these instructions in a video? Scan the QR code above with a smart phone or go to:  
<http://www.in.gov/isdh/26945.htm>

**CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT:  
[HTTP://IN.GOV/ISDH/24822.HTM](http://IN.GOV/ISDH/24822.HTM)**

***Thank you for  
your valuable  
contribution to  
Public Health!***

  
Indiana State  
Department of Health

## Collecting a Stool Sample



**Has your medical provider  
requested that you collect a stool  
(feces) sample?**

This brochure will walk you through the steps to safely and easily complete this task.

## 1. Get ready

Check that you have everything you need. Use a new kit for each person. Your kit should include:

- Specific stool sample collection unit: outer cardboard tube and inner metal container with at least one plastic container holding a liquid or gel to preserve the sample (DO NOT drink or discard the liquid or gel) and a small spoon



- Cardboard-and-tissue-paper liner (fits on a toilet seat)
- Paper bowl (can be placed on the liner, if needed)
- Gloves (for your comfort)
- Alcohol cleaning pad



## 2. Collect the sample

### Using a toilet

1. Urinate before starting.
2. Tape the liner onto the toilet seat with the printed instruction side facing up.
  - If the stool has been watery, put the paper bowl into the liner (see picture).
3. Poop into the liner (or bowl)
4. Using the small spoon, scoop some of the poop into the plastic container with the liquid or gel.
  - For solid stool, collect a sample the size of a cherry tomato.
  - If the stool is watery, pour from the paper bowl or use the spoon; the container should be between 2/3 and 3/4 full including the liquid or gel.



Liner by itself

### Using a diaper

- Option 1: If the stool is firm, use plastic wrap to line the diaper. The wrap should be placed so the urine runs into the diaper, not the wrap.
- Option 2: Last resort! Use the spoon to scrape poop from a dirty diaper. Try to get an amount that is at least the size of a cherry tomato.



Liner with bowl (for watery stools)

## 3. Pack it up

- Check that the lids are on tight to prevent leaks
- All the used materials can be thrown into the trash. The tissue from the seat liner can be flushed down the toilet.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water.
- Use the alcohol pad to wipe off the *outside* of the sealed containers—just in case anything happened to touch it.
- Reassemble the Stool Collection Unit as it was assembled prior to use. Remember to use one kit per person.
- Fill out the form found inside the Stool Collection Unit completely and place back in the unit with sample. This information is very important; without it, the sample cannot be tested.

## 4. Returning the stool specimen

You should have been given instructions about what to do with the sample after you pack it up from the local health department.

Follow any other special instructions for maintaining your sample, that were provided to you from the local health department.

## 5. Discard Materials

All soiled materials should be placed in the trash. Please collect the following materials and place them back in the bag to be thrown away:

- Cardboard toilet liner
- Alcohol pad (tissue may be flushed)
- Paper bowl
- Gloves

