

Pathology Department
Stepping Hill Hospital
Poplar Grove
Stockport
SK2 7JE

Email address: PathologyEnquiries@stockport.nhs.uk

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Dear Primary care colleagues,

Re: Faecal immunochemical testing (FIT)

FIT assessing for blood in faeces is essential to risk stratify patients with potential lower GI cancer.

Very soon Stepping Hill Hospital will be testing FIT samples on site leading to quicker results and hopefully improving the service for users and patients.

A few essential points:

- There are 3 different UK certified FIT assays each using a different sample picker. Our new assay (FOB Gold) has a mint green FIT collection picker made by Sentinel.
- When the lab is ready to go live the new FIT pickers (with patient collection instructions) will be issued to GPs.
- After each GP practice has received the new green pickers return the old blue FIT pickers to the lab as they will be re-used by MFT. If we receive a FIT request with the old blue picker we will forward this for analysis to an appropriate lab for at least couple of months.
- Practices should keep FIT pickers in one place (probably only with the reception team). Recently some FIT requests have been rejected as the sample tube had expired. Use the oldest pickers first and do not request excessive stock to store in the GP practice.
- To prevent rejected tests the GP team must check when they receive the FIT from the patient
 - Sample is labelled with the patients' full name & DOB and it matches the request form.
 - Check that the sample has been collected – is faeces in the tube?
 - Check that faeces is not on the outside of the tube.
 - Check that the extraction liquid has not leaked in the bag.
 - The correct collection date is on the sample and the form.

Please continue to request either high or low risk depending on the clinical scenario and emphasize to the patient that FIT is very important and to return it quickly – sadly upto 20% of patients fail to do the test.

If you have any questions please get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Mr Steven McCann FRCPATH(2008) HCPC No. C50257
Consultant Clinical Biochemist & Blood Sciences HOD/Clinical Lead