

NURSING HOMES AND SIMILAR SETTINGS GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTING STOOL SPECIMENS FOR GI OUTBREAK INVESTIGATIONS

What and What Not to Use

USE THIS



DO NOT USE THIS OR ANYTHING WITH A SNAP-ON LID



How to Collect Stool Specimens

- Use proper containers with screw tops (above, left).
- Do not use Vacutainer® urine specimen collection containers (above, right).
- Do not use any container with a snap-on lid.
- Collect stool specimens from *six* patients or staff.
- Collect 15–20 grams of whole stool (about the size of a walnut), 10–15 ml of diarrheal stool (about 3 tablespoons), or 3–4 rectal swabs with a visible amount of fecal matter.
- Collect fresh stool specimens as soon as possible after diarrhea onset to increase the chances of finding a bug. The optimum time is within 3–4 days.
- Label specimen container with patient name, date of birth, and collection date.
- Secure the screw-cap container lid with adhesive tape.
- Place the screw-cap container in a biohazard bag (zip-lock bag) with enough absorbent material to absorb the amount of fluid contained in the specimen.
- Place the specimen bag into a second plastic bag before refrigeration.
- Label the outside bag with patient name, date of birth, and specimen collection date.
- Refrigerate fresh stool specimens to prevent the proliferation of normal intestinal flora at 2–8°C (36° – 46°F). DO NOT FREEZE.
- Contact your local health department about pick up or delivery.