

# How to Collect a Stool Sample from Your Child

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As part of a health exam, your child will have his or her stool tested. The lab will check for eggs and parasites.

Parasites live in the gut, causing diarrhea (loose, watery stools) and other problems. Some parasites are too small to see with your eyes. However, some parasites, like certain kinds of worms, may be easily seen in the stool.

We need to test two stool samples.

## Sample one

The first sample is taken using things you have at home: plastic wrap and a baggie or glass jar.

### *For infants*

Diapers have chemicals that can harm parasites. This makes it harder to test for them. So, place a piece of plastic wrap inside the diaper. This will make a shield between the diaper and the stool.

To collect the stool:

1. Do your best to keep the sample **free of urine**. Wrap the sample in the plastic wrap.
2. Put it in a baggie or into a clean (boiled) glass jar with a lid.
3. Bring this with you to the clinic.

### *For older children*

It is best if your older child can have a bowel movement (pass stool) in the clinic. Then we can get a fresh sample to the lab right away. But we know this is hard to plan.

The next best thing is to bring a sample made **the morning of** your child's clinic visit. This may be done close to the time you leave for the clinic. Or it may be done on the way to the clinic.

To collect the stool:

1. Lift the toilet seat and place a piece of plastic wrap over the toilet. Sag it, don't stretch it.
2. Put the lid back down.
3. Collect the sample. Do your best to keep the sample **free of urine**.
4. Wrap it in the plastic wrap. Put it in a baggie or into a clean (boiled) glass jar with lid.
5. Bring it with you to the clinic.

**Please do not bring a sample that has fallen into the toilet water.**

*continued*

## Sample two

The second sample will be taken one day or more after the first. We will give you a kit for collecting the second sample. The kit will have:

- A small bottle to hold the sample. The bottle will contain a fixative (chemical that preserves the sample).
- An envelope for you to return the sample by mail.

Repeat the steps used to collect the first sample. Put the sample in the bottle, place the bottle in the envelope and mail it.