



ColonCancerCheck (CCC)

FAQ: FIT (Fecal Immunochemical Test)

What is FIT?

- Test used to screen average risk individuals for colorectal cancer & advanced pre-cancerous lesions;
- Checks for occult blood in the stool;
- Will replace the FOBT (fecal occult blood test).

Why the switch from FOBT to FIT?

- FIT is a more sensitive test (specific for Human Hb);
- Better at detecting colorectal cancer and advanced polyps;
- Patients prefer - only requires one stool specimen;
- No dietary restrictions required (including vitamin C);
- No medication restrictions.

Limitations of FIT

- FIT kit has shelf life of 12-18 months in comparison to FOBT at 3 years;
- With shelf life of 12-18 months, kit distribution will be managed by the designated labs as opposed to physician offices;
- Processing of specimens requires 14 days once collected (as opposed to FOBT at 21days).

Who gets FIT screened?

- Average risk individuals;
- Same criteria as FOBT;
- Age 50-74 (may decide to continue to age 85 depending on patient);
- Average risk - no first degree relative with colorectal cancer;
 - No personal history of inflammatory bowel diseases
 - No precancerous polyps requiring monitoring
- Asymptomatic patients;
- Not having been screened by FOBT or FIT in previous 2 years;
- Not having had a colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy in previous 10 years;
- OHIP eligible.

How often is FIT performed?

- Every 2 years.

What will be different with FIT compared to FOBT?

- **Primary Care Physician:**
 - Determines who is eligible;
 - Will complete requisition form and send to the designated lab;
 - Must validate patient address information and where FIT kit should be sent;
 - If result is FIT positive - responsible to refer patient for colonoscopy within 8 weeks;
 - To continue patients FOBT regular schedule until FIT screening available.
- **Processing Labs:**
 - Will check information on patient requisition;
 - Will mail FIT kit to address designated on requisition;
 - Kit to include: the collecting device, instructions on how to collect stool specimen, and materials for mailing back to the lab;
 - Unique bar code label added to each kit to avoid duplication.
- **Patients:**
 - Required to return completed FIT kit ASAP to the lab by return mail or dropped off at designated collection centers.

What happens next?

- FIT kit processed by the lab;
- If result is FIT positive, the lab sends result and recommends Primary Care Physician make referral for colonoscopy;
- Primary Care Physician is responsible for reporting results to patient;
- If result is FIT positive, the Primary Care Physician is responsible for arranging colonoscopy within 8 weeks;
- Cancer Care Ontario also sends results (both positive and negative) directly to the patient;
- Plans for FIT positive gastroenterologists (requiring specific skill set) to be available through designated phone number who will then arrange completed colonoscopy within the recommended 8 week time frame.