

## *Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum*

To: Central Zone Healthcare Providers and Health Service Directors

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Message: Guidance for appropriate requesting of Fecal Calprotectin testing

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Effective May 6, 2024 fecal calprotectin requests will only be approved by Central Zone (CZ) laboratories for patients in whom the evidence-based lower GI symptom care pathway, Gut-Link Smartpath, has been followed and directions to perform this test were provided. The Smartpath is accessible through the Virtual Hallway platform (<https://virtualhallway.ca/>) or by requesting a GUT-Link GI specialist telephone consultation through GI central triage (902 473-7833). Do not instruct the patient to collect the sample prior to obtaining the Gut-Link Smartpath direction. Please fax the Gut-Link Smartpath direction along with a copy of the approval request notification you have received, titled: *Referred Out Procedures, RRO Test Request Fecal Calprotectin* to 902-473-2123 for approval.

### **Notes:**

Calprotectin is a protein released by activated neutrophils when there is intestinal inflammation. This calprotectin then enters the lumen of the gut and elevated levels can be found in feces. High levels of fecal calprotectin (FC) can therefore distinguish inflammatory bowel disease from irritable bowel disease in conjunction with other diagnostic modalities such as endoscopy.

An elevated FC can however be found in other conditions that cause inflammation of the intestinal lining e.g., gastrointestinal infections, celiac disease and other malabsorptive conditions. Therefore, to ensure appropriate testing and interpretation of FC, and to avoid unnecessary referrals, the Division of Digestive Care and Endoscopy has developed an evidence-based algorithm for investigating chronic lower GI symptoms (Gut-Link Smartpath) to determine which patients would benefit from this testing.

### **For Questions/ concerns, please contact:**

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