

Instructions for the Collection of Pinworm Samples

Please read carefully or your specimen might be rejected by the lab

Introduction

Pinworms (*Enterobius vermicularis*) are worms which live in the lower large bowel. The female lays its eggs on the skin around the anus at night. The body's reaction to these eggs causes the itch associated with the infection. Pinworm infection is detected in the laboratory by finding the tiny eggs that are laid on the skin around the anus. The best method available for collecting these tiny eggs is the Vaseline-Paraffin swab. The eggs can be identified in the laboratory using a microscope.

The container:

- Vaseline-Paraffin swab provided inside sealed tube.
- Vaseline-Paraffin swabs are suitable for pinworm testing at the QEII Parasitology Laboratory only.

Safety:

- As pinworm ova become infective within hours of being laid, gloves should be worn during specimen collection and hands washed afterwards.

How to collect the specimen:

- The best time for specimen collection is after the patient has settled for the night or first thing in the morning, before the patient has either washed or passed stool.
- Wear gloves.
- Remove the Vaseline-Paraffin swab from the tube.
- With the patient lying on his/her side, the perianal skin should be exposed and the swab should be rolled over the skin within 1 cm of the anus.
- The swab should also be inserted, not more than 5 mm (1/3 inch), into the anal canal.
- Replace the Vaseline-Paraffin swab back into the tube and seal tight.
- Ensure that the tube is labeled with the patient's name, date of birth, health card number and date and time of specimen collection.
- There should also be a completed requisition accompanying the specimen.

Please note: If you have trouble collecting the specimen, please contact your healthcare provider

Make sure the specimen container label includes:

- Your legal name
- Your Health Card Number or another unique identifier (as determined by your healthcare provider)
- Date and time of collection.

Make sure the requisition form includes:

- Your legal name
- Your date of birth
- Your Health Card Number or another unique identifier (as determined by your healthcare provider)
- Physicians full name and address
- Date and time of collection.

Deliver the specimen within 24 hours to:

QEII Health sciences Centre
Central Specimen Accessioning
Main Floor, Mackenzie Building
5788 University Avenue,
Halifax, N.S.
(24 hour access for drop-offs)

or: Your local district laboratory