

FAECAL SAMPLE COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Why submit a faecal sample?

There is an outbreak of gastroenteritis in your child's kinder or childcare centre. Managing the outbreak will limit the spread of disease. Identifying the pathogen (bug) is crucial for treating and controlling the outbreak; therefore, a faecal sample should be collected and sent to the laboratory for analysis. Gastroenteritis can spread quickly to staff and children but also to family members. Limiting the spread means better health outcomes and less interruptions for families.

Sample results are used by Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit to identify the pathogen making people sick and help manage the response to the outbreak.

What happens to the sample?

The sample is sent to the Microbiological Diagnosis Unit (MDU) Public Health Laboratory and the Victorian Infectious Diseases Laboratory (VIDRL) for testing for bacteria and viruses that cause gastroenteritis. Testing is strictly related to gastroenteritis.

You can obtain a copy of the result through your local Council. Individual results are not provided to the childcare centre.

If you require any further information, contact the Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit on 1800 959 400 or lmphu@bendigohealth.org.au

Who should submit a sample?

Samples are limited to centre staff and children.

Samples should be taken whilst symptoms are occurring or up to 72 hours after symptoms commence.

Your childcare centre or local Council can provide a faecal sample collection kit. Your local Council will arrange collection of the sample.

Staff and child faeces collection

Step 1: Collect a sample pot from your centre or local council. Confirm collection or drop off arrangements. On the label add the patient's name, date of birth, and childcare centre.

Step 2: Place something in the toilet bowl or potty for smaller children to catch the faeces, such as a clean takeaway food container, then pass the faeces - avoid contaminating the sample with urine.

Step 3: Transfer some of the faeces you have collected into the collection container using the lid's built-in scoop and screw the lid shut. The sample should be about the size of a walnut.

Step 4: Write the date and time of collection onto the specimen container.

Step 5: Empty the remainder of the faeces into the toilet bowl and discard. Place anything used to collect the faeces into a plastic bag, tie it up and throw it in the bin.

Step 6: Place the sample into the biohazard bag and store in a fridge or esky with ice bricks. DO NOT freeze.

Step 7: Let Council know you are ready for the sample to be collected or drop to the pre-arranged location without delay. Samples need to be sent to the laboratory as soon as possible.

Collecting faeces from a nappy

Step 1: Collect a sample pot from your centre or local council. Confirm collection or drop off arrangements. On the label add the patient's name, date of birth, and childcare centre.

Step 2: Place a small piece of clean cloth or a fresh nappy liner in your baby's clean nappy.

Step 3: Once your bay has passed some faeces, collect a small amount using the scoop on the underside of the specimen container. The sample should be about the size of a walnut.

Step 4: Write the date and time of collection onto the specimen container.

Step 5: Dispose of soiled nappy and liner.

Step 6: Place the sample into the biohazard bag and store in a fridge or esky with ice bricks. DO NOT freeze.

Step 7: Let Council know you are ready for the sample to be collected or drop to the pre-arranged location without delay. Samples need to be sent to the laboratory as soon as possible.