

BHR HOSPITALS – BIOCHEMISTRY

FAECAL IMMUNCHEMICAL TEST (FIT) INFORMATION FOR USERS

Quantitative faecal immunochemical testing (QFIT) to guide referral of suspected bowel cancer patients

BHRUT is now live with faecal immunochemical testing (FIT). Fit is recommended to guide referral for suspected colorectal cancer in people without rectal bleeding who have unexplained symptoms but do not meet the criteria for a suspected cancer pathway referral outlined in NICE's guideline on suspected cancer (NG12).

Tests will be carried out in the Biochemistry laboratory at Barking, Havering and Redbridge University NHS Trust (BHRUT).

What are the sample requirements?

Haemoglobin in faeces is unstable.

Special '*QFIT sample tubes*' which contain a solution to stabilize the haemoglobin in the faecal sample should be used for this test. These stool collection devices can be ordered from BHRUT Pathology stores.

How should I make a request?

For eligible patients the GP should request **QFIT** on cyberlab (or request form) and provide the patient with:

1. Printed request form,
2. Patient information instructions detailing practical advice on how to collect their stool sample and expected next steps. The information leaflet has been translated into 10 (11 including English) of the most common spoken languages in London (see link below) and the
3. FIT sample tube.

Ensure that the patient is instructed to label the stool collection device with their name, DOB, NHS number and sample date. The stool collection device should be returned to the GP surgery for transportation to the laboratory **or** brought directly to the BHRUT laboratory at Queen's or King George Hospital. Please note that the sample should be received by the laboratory within 48 hours of sample date.



Results and follow up

The results of the test will be sent straight to the requesting practice within 5 working days.



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Patients who have a positive FIT of $\geq 10 \mu\text{g Hb/g}$ faeces should be referred on a 2 week wait lower gastrointestinal cancer pathway and should receive patient information regarding their urgent referral.

Undetectable haemoglobin in faeces has a very high negative predictive value for colorectal cancer (97-99%). Patients who have a negative FIT result are unlikely to have bowel cancer; however, if a patient's symptoms still persist and you are concerned, then you are advised to seek further guidance.

GP practices should add patients to their safety netting systems, ensuring that patients are followed up if FIT samples are not returned or if patients do not attend their urgent appointment.

Please be aware that any samples collected into the incorrect sample tubes (e.g. blue top universal) will not be accepted for analysis.

Further information can be obtained from:

Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) for symptomatic patients information leaflet

<https://www.healthylondon.org/suspected-cancer-referrals/patient-information-leaflets/>

This video demonstrates the taking of samples:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6v_lZBJkzPA

Laboratory contact details:

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QFIT is currently outside the scope for UKAS accreditation (ISO15189:2012)

References

NICE Guideline DG30: Quantitative faecal immunochemical tests to guide referral for colorectal cancer in primary care, <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/dg30>

NICE guideline NG12: Suspected cancer: recognition and referral, <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng12>