

Health Care Provider Bulletin

CHANGES TO FECAL OCCULT BLOOD TESTING

Dear Health Care Providers,

We have recently been notified that the manufacturer will no longer be providing Hema Screen Occult cards for the Guaiac Fecal Occult Blood Test (gFOBT). Starting December 1, 2023, LifeLabs will no longer be supplying gFOBT cards to healthcare providers. Testing using gFOBT will be discontinued in the spring of 2024. Until the test is discontinued, the cards may be picked up by patients at any LifeLabs patient service center.

The alternative FOBT offered by LifeLabs is fecal immunochemical testing (FIT). FIT test is covered by the ColonCancerCheck program. A recent audit on our gFOBT tested patients showed that most of them are eligible for FIT testing. We encourage health care providers to order FIT testing for those patients. Eligibility is determined based on the patient's age, which should fall within the range of **50 to 74 years**. For full eligibility see:

[LINK TO FIT TESTING AT LIFELABS](#)

Please note, although the ColonCancerCheck program does not recommend regular screening for people under age 50 or over age 74, the program will accept requests for FIT for people who are ages 75 to 85, at the discretion of the primary care provider. Decisions to screen outside of the recommended age range should include consideration of current health status, life expectancy, and screening history. To order the FIT test, fill out this [linked Requisition](#) and fax it to 1-833-676-1427.

FIT test is recommended for colorectal cancer screening because of its several advantages over FOBT:

- FIT is more specific for lower gastrointestinal tract bleeding which improves its sensitivity and specificity for detecting advanced neoplasia and colorectal cancer.
- FIT is semiquantitative and requires no dietary restrictions.
- Only one stool sample is required.
- As part of the ColonCancerCheck program, patients will get letters from Ontario Health (unless they have opted out) to communicate their test result and to invite them to screen when they are next due.

For testing patients who are not eligible for ColonCancerCheck program, an alternate process is under development. More information will be available shortly.

We apologize for any inconvenience.

For any questions, please contact LifeLabs Customer Care Center 1-877-849-3637.

Thank you,

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