



# Laboratory Medicine Bulletin

## Discontinuation of beside Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) at PHC sites

May 26, 2021

**Effective May 31, 2021, Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) performed at the bedside will no longer be endorsed or supported by the Providence Health Care point-of-care testing (POCT) program.**

The stool guaiac FOBT is commonly performed to detect microscopic bleeding in stool. Its indication for colorectal cancer screening has largely been replaced by the fecal immunochemical test (FIT), available for outpatients as part of the provincial Colorectal Cancer Screening Program. If screening is desired for long-term inpatients, please contact the Biochemist on-call for arrangement and approval.

As FOBT is affected by many foods, medications and supplements, and prone to false positives and false negatives, FOBT is not recommended for other indications or in acute care settings.

### Questions:

For any questions or concerns about this change, please do not hesitate to contact one of us from the St Paul's Hospital laboratory.

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### References:

<sup>1</sup>Drescher, et al. A call for a reconsideration of the use of fecal occult blood testing in emergency medicine. *J Emerg Med* 2020; 58:54-58. (PMID: 31926780)

<sup>2</sup>Gupta A, Tang Z, Agrawal D. Eliminating in-hospital fecal occult blood testing: our experience with disinvestment. *Am J Med* 2018; 131:760-763. (PMID: 29601803)