



Stool Test Options for Colorectal Cancer Screening in Primary Care Patients

1. Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)

- **Type:** immunochemical
- **Purpose:** screens for hidden (occult) blood in stool, which may signal colorectal cancer or large polyps
- **Sample needed:** one small stool sample using a collection stick
- **Return:** return to the PCP office or lab within 3 days of collection
- **Frequency:** every year
- **Special Notes:**
 - No dietary or medication restrictions
 - Easy for patients to use
 - Most recommended for in-office distribution and return

2. Guaiac-based Fecal Occult Blood Test (gFOBT)

- **Type:** chemical (guaiac reaction)
- **Purpose:** detects hidden blood in the stool
- **Sample needed:** three separate stool samples collected on different days
- **Return:** return to the PCP office or lab promptly
- **Frequency:** every year
- **Special notes:**
 - Requires dietary restrictions (avoid red meat, vitamin C, NSAIDs before test)
 - Less sensitive than FIT
 - Still used in some practices but less preferred

3. High-sensitivity gFOBT

- **Type:** enhanced chemical test
- **Purpose:** improved detection of blood compared to standard gFOBT
- **Sample needed:** three stool samples
- **Return:** return to PCP or lab
- **Frequency:** every year
- **Special notes:**
 - Still requires dietary restrictions
 - More sensitive than standard gFOBT but less convenient than FIT

Among these options, the most offered test kit in primary care offices is the **FIT**. It is preferred because it requires only one sample, involves no dietary restrictions, and is simple for patients to complete and return.