



CLINICAL PRACTICE CHANGE

February 28, 2017

Fecal Occult Blood Testing in Hospitalized Patients

Date Effective: March 27, 2017

Background Information:

- The current version of fecal occult blood test (FOBT) in Manitoba is guaiac based, requiring specific patient preparation and collection adherence for optimal performance.
- The sample cards need to sit for 3 days prior to testing to reduce activity of interfering substances that cause false positives.
- The test is designed for colorectal cancer screening.
- Samples from 3 separate bowel movements have to be collected on 3 or more days
- This test has seen increased off-label use (anemic patients with active gastrointestinal bleed). Testing performed for off-label indications has no clinical value, and may delay appropriate care.

Change in or New Test Procedure:

- Effective March 27, 2017, DSM will restrict the use of this test to the approved indication of screening for colorectal cancer in asymptomatic patients. Laboratories will perform the test only when they receive sample cards with 3 samples collected over 3 days.
- The test will not be performed for hospitalized patients. If the test needs to be performed for inpatients for the approved indication of screening for colorectal cancer, the laboratory will need to be contacted during working day time hours.
- Patients with anemia suspected to have gastrointestinal blood (GI) loss should be investigated using CancerCare Manitoba Anemia guidelines/algorithms (http://www.cancercare.mb.ca/home/health_care_professionals/information_for_health_care_professionals/workup_of_suspected_cancer/) and endoscopy where indicated.
- Patients without anemia, with visual evidence of GI blood loss should be investigated with gastrointestinal endoscopy.

Patient Impact:

- Patients will receive the appropriate investigation for their health problem.
- Unnecessary testing will not be done.
- Inaccurate or misleading results due to off label use of test will be avoided.

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