MetaXplore™ GI Plus Sampling Instructions

Unlock health from within

CO-BIOME™ By MiCROBA

Congratulations on taking the first step towards exploring your digestive and gut microbiome health to unlock health from within.

To help your healthcare professional capture meaningful insights from your sample, please read the instructions in full before taking your sample and follow the directions for use.

Make sure you have all of the below items included in your Co-Biome™ MetaXplore™ GI Plus sampling kit

The below items are included in your sampling kit:

1. Instruction booklet
2. Checklist
3. Pack of collection tissues
4. Collection swab
5. Collection pot
6. Blue-capped collection tube
7. Day of collection stickers x 2
8. Collection pot pouch with temperature sensors
9. Collection swab pouch
10. Bristol stool chart
11. Reply-paid envelope
12. Kit box
13. Ice brick
14. Thermal pouch

Please check your kit is addressed to you and you have each kit item listed before beginning your test. If any of these kit items are missing or damaged, please contact Co-Biome Customer Service by email **contact@co-biome.com** or phone **1300 974 621**.

What you need to know before taking a sample

- **You can only collect and send a sample on a Monday or Tuesday.**
  Do not collect a sample on a Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday.
- You will need to **maintain your regular diet and lifestyle for at least two weeks** before taking a sample. Changes to your exercise habits, short-term use of supplements or antibiotics or eating new foods may influence your sample. No dietary restriction is required.
- You will need to collect a sample from **a bowel movement that is typical for you**.
- You will **not be able to collect a sample if you are menstruating** or for **three days after menstruation**.
- **Avoid initiating antibiotic, antimicrobial, antiseptic and antiviral therapies** where possible as these can impact your results.

What you need to know before taking a sample

2 days before taking your sample
Avoid drinking alcohol.
Avoid taking NSAIDs (e.g. ibuprofen, asprin) unless directed by a healthcare professional.

1 day before taking your sample
Freeze your ice brick in the kit box overnight as you will need this to return your sample.
Be prepared to take your sample from the first bowel movement of the day and allow 45 minutes to collect and complete the sampling process.

What you need to know before taking a sample

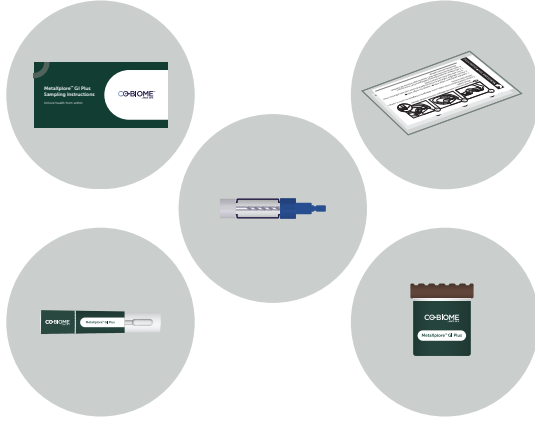
Swab and container identification
Your sample is identified by the QR code (square barcode) on the base of the sampling swab and top of the collection pot and your completed day of collection stickers.

STEP 1

Prepare kit items to take your sample

When you are ready to collect a sample, take the collection kit to the toilet. You will need:

a. Instruction booklet
b. Pack of collection tissues
c. Collection swab tube
d. Collection pot with lid scoop
e. Blue-capped collection tube

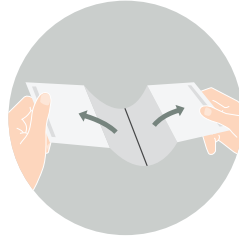


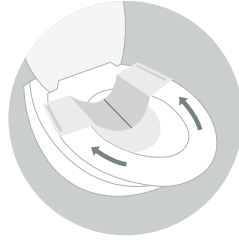
STEP 2

Prepare a collection tissue on the toilet

Open one collection tissue accessory provided and carefully peel open the edge with a ▲ and repeat for edge with a ■. Attach the adhesive surface of the collection tissue to the back of the toilet seat with the adhesive close to the outer edge of the seat and press firmly.

Two collection tissues have been supplied for your convenience in case you have a problem with your first collection attempt.





STEP 3

Provide faecal sample onto the collection tissue

Provide faecal sample onto the collection tissue without contamination from urine, toilet water and other contaminants. To ensure the sample remains uncontaminated, you may need to urinate before opening the collection tissue accessory and starting the faecal collection process. Alternatively, you may use a clean, disposable container by placing it into the toilet bowl after you have voided for urine. This collection method is recommended if you have looser bowel movements.

STEP 4

Take note of your stool consistency

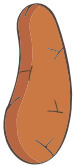
Please take note of your stool consistency using the Bristol Stool Chart below as you will need to record this in a later step.

Type 1

Separate hard lumps like nuts (hard to pass)

Type 2

Sausage shape but lumpy



Type 3

Like a sausage but with cracks on its surface

Type 4

Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft

Type 5

Soft blobs with clear-cut edges (passed easily)

Type 6

Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool

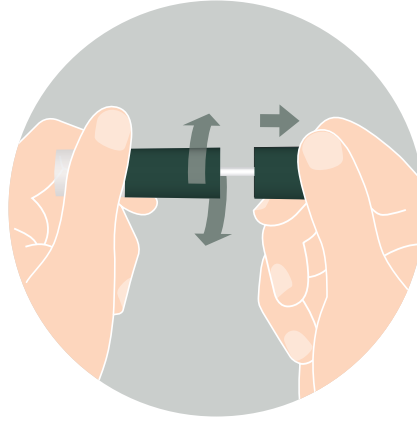
Type 7

Watery, no solid pieces; entirely liquid

STEP 5

Collect your swab sample

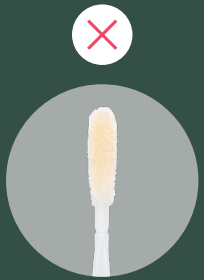
Open the swab tube by twisting and pulling with a firm grip. It is important that the swab tip does not come into contact with your hand or any other surfaces, as this can interfere with the sample.



Using the faecal material collected in step 3, apply a small amount to the swab. Only a small smear is needed with no lumps captured on the swab.

Lightly touch the round end of the swab to pick up a small smear. It is critical not to overload your sample. Only a small discolouration of the swab is needed for testing.

Overloaded sample

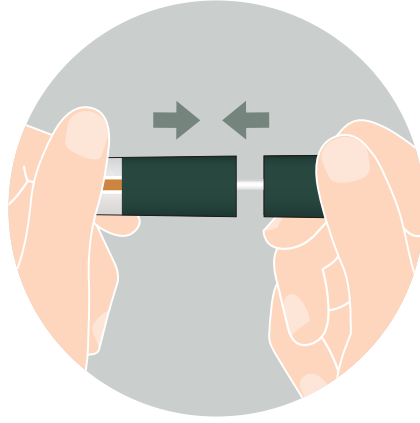


Underloaded sample

Do not overload or underload your sample. Our lab may not be able to process your sample or provide a report for your swab if it contains too much or too little material.

Place the swab in the tube and click to close. The swab should be placed immediately back in the tube without touching any other surfaces. Firmly close the tube until you hear it click and set aside.

Contact our team immediately if the swab has touched another surface.



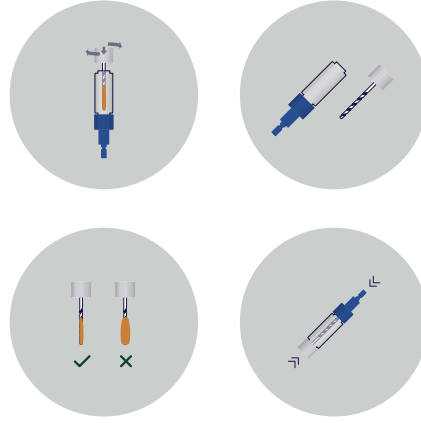
STEP 6

Blue-capped collection tube instructions

Unscrew the white end of the blue capped tube (blue cap may only be opened by qualified personnel) and stick the spiralled tip into the specimen at three different sites

Pay attention not too much specimen sticks to the spiralled tip. Do not scoop the stool specimen.

Screw the stick tightly into the collection tube and shake the tube thoroughly in order to release the specimen from the collection tip.



STEP 7

Collect your pot sample

Open the collection pot and use the scoop inside the pot lid to collect the faecal material from step 3. Collect material from three to five different sections of the stool and ensure the bottom of the collection pot is covered with material. Fill the collection pot to a minimum volume of around one tablespoon and a maximum volume of 2/3 of the pot. If your stool contains any blood or mucus, please avoid collecting any areas with blood or mucus. During this process ensure that the scoop doesn't come into contact with any other surfaces.

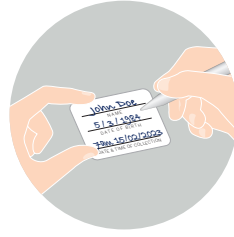
STEP 8

Drop the collection tissue accessory into the toilet and flush

Drop the collection tissue accessory into the toilet. Wait for one minute for the paper to become soft, then flush. Alternatively, you can discard in the garbage.

STEP 9

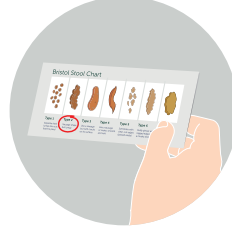
Label your samples



Use the day of collection stickers provided to label all three collection devices with name, date of birth, and the time noting AM or PM and date of sample collection. **Note: Please ensure you label both your swab and collection pot sample as we will not be able to process your samples without this information.**

STEP 10

Select your stool consistency on the Bristol Stool Chart

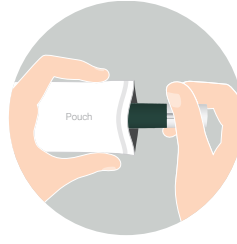


Using the Bristol Stool Chart provided, select your stool consistency.

STEP 11

Place the collection swab in the collection swab pouch

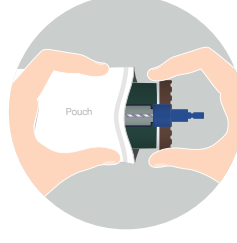
Place the collection swab in the collection pouch provided and press the pouch to seal. Do not place this swab in the fridge.



STEP 12

Place the collection pot and the blue-capped collection tube in the collection pot pouch

Place the collection pot and the blue-capped collection tube in the collection pot pouch provided. Do not discard the absorbent paper. Insert and press the pouch closed to seal.



STEP 13

Refrigerate the collection pot pouch for a minimum of 30 minutes

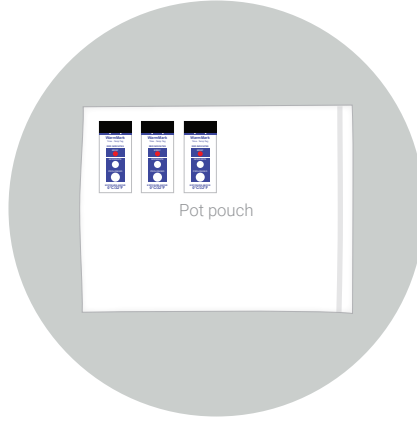
Place **only the collection pot pouch** in the fridge for a minimum of 30 minutes or until ready to post that same day.

Do not place the collection swab pouch in the fridge at anytime.

STEP 14

Remove collection pot pouch from the fridge and activate all three temperatures sensors

After the collection pot pouch has been in the fridge for a minimum of 30 minutes or when you are ready to post, remove the collection pot pouch from the fridge. Activate the temperature sensors attached to the pouch in a room that is 30 degrees or below. Activate by folding up and pulling the indicator activation tab until the tab and barrier film has been removed.



STEP 15

Pack the samples for return

Pack the collection pot pouch and ice brick into the thermal pouch and place them in the kit box with the insert removed. Do not include the collection swab pouch.

Place the collection swab pouch and completed Bristol Stool chart in the reply-paid envelope. Then add the kit box separately.

STEP 16

Post over the counter at Australia Post

Return to our laboratory by taking to your nearest Australia Post Office and returning over the counter.

Frequently Asked Questions

Should I discontinue probiotics or supplements before sampling?

If these are part of your usual habits, there is no need to stop taking supplements or probiotics before taking the sample as you want to reflect your 'normal' microbiome. We suggest maintaining your normal supplement regime for two weeks prior to sampling and collecting a sample from a bowel movement that is typical for you. Some practitioners have their own preferences for pre-sampling preparation so if you are working with a practitioner, you should check with them and follow their guidelines. Consult with your practitioner before making any changes to prescribed probiotics or supplements and do not discontinue any medications without their advice.

Should I stick to my regular habits before sampling?

If you would like to see what your 'normal' gut microbiome looks like, stick to your normal habits for at least two weeks prior to sampling. The microorganisms inhabiting your gut are quite stable over time (in the absence of any major disruptions) and it is only their abundance that will change based on your diet and other habits.

Can I provide a liquid stool sample?

Yes, you can still send a liquid stool sample for analysis. Although it is important to note that we will not be able to report on faecal elastase and faecal pH as liquid stools impact the accuracy of faecal elastase and pH measurements.

Can I provide a sample with visible blood present?

Yes, you can provide a sample with visible blood although the presence of visible blood in a faecal sample has a higher possibility of failing the initial assessment for sample processing. If possible, waiting until you are able to provide a sample without active bleeding would be advised.

Can I provide a sample if I have been taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)?

Yes, you can still send a sample if you have been taking NSAIDs. Although the use of NSAIDs will impact the level of calprotectin reported and should be considered in the report interpretation.

For answers on more Frequently Asked Questions visit our website **co-biome.com** or contact the Co-Biome Customer Service team on **1300 974 621** for more information.

Unlock health from within

METAXPLORE™ GI PLUS IS ONLY AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE THROUGH A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL.

The faecal occult blood, quantitative polymerase chain reaction (qPCR) and enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays (ELISA) used in MetaXplore™ GI Plus are diagnostic and are approved for clinical use. The faeces pH assay used in MetaXplore™ GI Plus is for research use only and not to be used as a basis for diagnosis. The metagenomic assays used in MetaXplore™ GI Plus are to determine the microbiome populations and associated functional pathways in a faecal sample. The application is for research use only and is not to be used as a basis for diagnosis. Learn more about the journey we are on to validate this gold-standard technology for clinical diagnosis and application at co-biome.com.