



## **BROADCAST MESSAGE**

### **Fecal Occult Blood Testing Suspended**

All laboratory providers in BC have suspended Fecal Occult Blood testing (FOBT) using Fecal Immunochemical Testing (FIT) due to a manufacturer's reagent problem.

The Colon Screening Program recommends that asymptomatic average risk patients await reintroduction of FIT. Patients should not be referred for Guaiac-based FOBT, as this test has a lower sensitivity and is not part of the screening program.

Higher than average risk patients (strong family history of colon cancer or personal history of adenomas) can continue to be referred for colonoscopy using the Colon Screening Program colonoscopy referral form.

Patients with lower gastrointestinal symptoms or iron deficiency anaemia should be referred for consideration for colonoscopy. Neither FIT nor guaiac-based FOBT are indicated for these patients.

What this means for health care professionals and patients:

For patients with a requisition for fecal occult blood testing

- Collection kits will not be issued.
- Patients will be advised to await notification of testing resuming and the process to follow once testing restarts.
- Patients may be required to return to their health care practitioner to re-order the test.
- Please contact your local laboratory provider for specific instructions.

For patients submitting a specimen

- The lab will accept the specimen, but it will not be tested and will be disposed of safely.
- Patients will be advised to await notification of testing resuming and the process to follow once testing restarts.
- This may require patients to return to their health care practitioner to re-order the test.
- Please contact your local laboratory provider for specific instructions.

For patients who have previously submitted a specimen that has not been reported

- Testing will not be performed.
- You will need to re order the test when testing resumes.

For patients with an unused FIT kit

- Unused FIT kits need to be disposed of properly and should not be placed in household garbage.
- Patients should be instructed to return their unused kit to a specimen collection site for proper disposal.
- You will need to re-order the test when testing resumes.

The manufacturer's issue is under investigation. At this time, there is no estimated date for resuming testing. An alert will be posted on the website when FIT testing becomes available.