HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
LABORATORY POLICY MANUAL
OCCULT BLOOD - STOOL

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PRINCIPLE:

The Hemoccult SENSA test is a rapid qualitative method for detecting fecal occult blood which may be indicative of gastrointestinal disease. The Hemoccult test is recommended for professional use as a diagnostic aid during routine physical examinations, for hospital patients to monitor for gastrointestinal bleeding in patients with iron deficiency anemia or recuperating from surgery, peptic ulcer, ulcerative colitis and other conditions, and in screening programs for colorectal cancer when the patient instructions are closely followed. The Hemoccult® test is based on the oxidation of guaiac by hydrogen peroxide to a blue colored compound. The heme portion of hemoglobin, if present, contains peroxidase activity which catalyzes the oxidation of alpha guaiaconic acid (found in the guaiac paper) by hydrogen peroxide (component of the developer) to form a highly conjugated blue quinone compound.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION:

NOTE: Hemoccult slides should be brought to the laboratory once specimen is in place. The following procedure is to be completed by Nursing personnel

1. Feces should be collected in a clean container with no additives.
2. Using the applicator stick, place a small sample of specimen onto the guaiac paper window – this area is labeled for the sample.
3. Close the sample window flap securely and label the test slide appropriately. Specimen is then delivered to the lab promptly.

REAGENTS:

Hemoccult Sensa ® test slide
Wooden Applicator Stick
Hemoccult Sensa ® Color Developer

QUALITY CONTROL:

External control is not required.
Each Hemoccult Sensa Slide has internal controls which the manufacturer refers to as the “performance monitor”. The performance monitor includes both a positive and negative control to be performed and documented with each patient tested.

PROCEDURE:

1. Open the test slide flap designated for testing purposes. This is opposite the specimen sample application window.
2. Drop 2 drops of Hemoccult developer on each of the specimen testing windows, and 1 drop on the control circle.
3. The control circle should be readable within 10 seconds, the patient test window should be read within 60 seconds for any blue color.
4. Should the performance monitor fail to react as expected, the patient test is invalid. The test should be repeated.

RESULT REPORTING:
Any trace of blue is considered a positive result. Report any blue color as "positive" and lack of blue color as "negative"

A detailed list of interfering substances is given in the package insert.

REFERENCES:
Hemoccult Package Insert, Beckman Coulter, Inc. Fullerton, Ca. rev. 10/02