

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
LABORATORY POLICY MANUAL
OCCULT BLOOD – GASTRIC ASPIRATE/VOMITUS**

Effective Date: March, 1998

Cross Referenced:

Reviewed Date: 6/1/2012

Revised Date: 4/10, 5/12

Policy No: SC 100.06

Origin: Special Collections

Authority: Laboratory Director

Page: 1 of 2

PRINCIPLE: The Gastrocult slide includes both a specially buffered guaiac test for occult blood and a pH test based on the principle that certain dyes change color with the changes in hydrogen ion concentration in the specimen. When a gastric specimen containing blood is applied to the Gastrocult slide, the hemoglobin from lysed blood cells in the sample comes in contact with the guaiac. After application of the sample, the developer is added and creates a guaiac/oxidase like reaction that turns the test paper blue in the presence of blood.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION:

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

1. Gastric sample (gastric aspirates obtained by nasogastric intubation or vomitus) should be collected into a clean container, no additives.
2. Samples should be tested for pH within a few minutes after collection; occult blood may be tested for up to 4 days after application to the slide.
3. Using the applicator stick, place a small sample of specimen onto the guaiac paper window – this area is labeled for the sample.
4. Close the sample window flap securely and label the test slide appropriately. Specimen is then delivered to the lab promptly.

REAGENTS:

Gastrocult test slide

Wooden Applicator Stick

Gastrocult Color Developer

QUALITY CONTROL:

Each Gastrocult SENSASlide has a built-in control for both positive and negative comparison. The positive area is impregnated with a hemoglobin-based catalyst that turns blue upon contact with the developer. The negative area contains no such catalyst and should not turn blue upon addition of the developer. If the controls do not function properly, discard the test slide and repeat the testing.

PROCEDURE:

1. Determine the pH of the sample by visual comparison of the test area to pH color chart. This should be done promptly after adding the sample to the test area.
2. Drop 2 drops of Gastrocult developer directly on the sample on the test window, and one drop between the positive and negative control circle.
3. Read the test area and controls within 60 seconds for any blue color development.

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REPORTING RESULTS:

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:

Gastroccult Package Insert, Beckman Coulter, Inc. 4300 N. Harbor Blvd, Fullerton CA 92834. September 2001.