TEST UPDATE

Fecal Occult Screening (3 cards) to be Discontinued

UVMMC

Effective 9/13/23, the UVMMC laboratory will be discontinuing fecal occult blood screening utilizing the traditional guaiac testing cards. The preferred fecal occult blood test for colorectal cancer screening is a fecal immunochemical test (FIT). Compared to guaiac-based testing methods, FIT testing has increased sensitivity for colorectal cancer, as well as advanced colorectal neoplasia and adenoma.1 In addition, the American College of Physicians recommend FIT as the 1st line non-invasive screen for colorectal cancer in asymptomatic average-risk adults and does not support the use of Cologuard® in this patient population.2

Guaiac-based testing will still be available for the investigation of upper and lower GI bleeding. This testing is performed in the main laboratory or as a Point of Care Test (POCT).

Clinic sites that order the guaiac-based cards for their current colorectal cancer screening needs should discontinue using these and contact UVMMC Lab Outreach (laboutreach@uvmhealth.org) to obtain FIT testing kits. The FIT testing kits contain a return envelope that is pre-addressed to the UVMMC laboratory so that patients no longer need to drop off their samples at a clinic or hospital site, but can mail them through regular mail at their convenience.

If you have any questions or concerns about this change, please contact the UVMMC Medical Director of Clinical Chemistry Dr. Clayton Wilburn at clayton.wilburn@uvmhealth.org.

References:

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