

To: Clients of URMC Labs

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Re: **Fecal Occult Blood Test**

Date: November 15, 2010

Starting in November 2010, the URMC Lab at SMH will be converting to a more sensitive method for outpatient stool occult blood, the Beckman Coulter Hemoccult ICT fecal immunochemical test (FIT). This test will replace the existing Hemoccult II testing cards that are currently being used at our outpatient facilities.

The main advantages of the FIT test are improved sensitivity and specificity. In lab studies, the FIT test demonstrated a sensitivity to detect Hgb levels at .150 mg/g of stool as compared to the current guaiac method that did not detect Hgb until levels of 1.125mg/g of stool. The increased specificity of the test is due to its reactivity to the globin portion of the red blood cells. By detecting globin the tests are more specific for lower gastrointestinal bleeding.

The FIT test is done essentially the same way as the current guaiac method, but some people may find it easier to use because there are no drug or dietary restrictions. As is the case now, kits will be distributed to provider offices that contain three cards, applicator sticks, mailer, and lab requisition. The cards, however, are different and should not be confused or interchanged with the Hemoccult II guaiac cards. Another important distinction is that there is no developer with this test. Consequently, all completed kits will need to be sent to URMC Labs for analysis.

Rollout for this program will start on a limited basis and be coordinated with the Laboratory Outreach Department. Ordering forms, collection instructions and other educational information will be discussed during this set-up time period. Questions about this new test should be directed to Dr. Julietta Fiscella or Dr. Tai Kwong at the methods listed above.