

From the
Clinical Service Director



A/Prof Tom Dodd

19 November 2021

Faecal Calprotectin as a marker of bowel inflammation – New Medicare items

On 1 November 2021, two new items were listed on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) for faecal calprotectin (FCP), used in the diagnosis of inflammatory bowel disease.

These MBS items are available through SA Pathology to eligible patients.

FCP testing has acceptable diagnostic performance, sensitivity and specificity, evidence for comparative effectiveness and clinical utility, while being safer and cost effective when compared to an endoscopy.

MBS item 66522 – FCP testing of patients with gastrointestinal symptoms suggestive of inflammatory or functional bowel disease presenting to a Medical Practitioner. These patients must:

- have been experiencing symptoms suggestive of inflammatory or functional bowel disease for more than 6-weeks
- not be older than 50 years of age
- have had infectious causes excluded
- have a low likelihood of malignancy, and
- must not be presenting with any clinical alarms – these include but are not limited to unexplained weight loss, anaemia, melaena, rectal bleeding, diarrhoea, family history of colon cancer or IBD or coeliac disease.

MBS item 66523 – FCP testing of patients presenting to a Specialist Gastroenterologist, where the initial FCP test (66522) was inconclusive (50-100 ug/g) and the Specialist feels an endoscopic examination is not initially warranted.

Please ensure that all relevant clinical information is provided on the request form.

For all other FCP request that do not meet the above criteria, including follow up requests by a consultant gastroenterologist to monitor disease activity, a fee of \$77.00 will be charged to your patient.

Please complete a patient [Agreement to Pay form](#) prior to processing of sample.

Regards,

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