

Using Charcoal to Diagnose Rectovaginal Fistulas

Rectovaginal Fistula is an abnormal opening in the vagina that allows stool to pass through the vagina.

Activated charcoal is a medication you will be using to find out if you have a fistula. This medication is available over the counter but it can be difficult to find. Your pharmacy may need a prescription so they can get this medication for you, or they may need to order it.

What are my instructions?

1. Drink 25 grams of activated charcoal.
2. 24 hours after drinking the charcoal, you will see your stool is black.
3. Make sure your skin is completely clean and dry. Insert a tampon into your vagina. If you see black on the tampon, your test is positive. This means you have a vaginal fistula; a passageway for stool to come from your rectum to your vagina.

Who do I call with the results?

Call Michigan Bowel Control Program nurses at (877) 462-6935 with the results or any questions.

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