

Test Claim Boundary Checklist

Use this before buying or acting on a stool or microbiome test for IBS symptoms. It is not a diagnosis or a replacement for clinician-guided care.

1. Name the Test Type

Test type	Main question
Medical stool test	Is there infection, blood, inflammation, malabsorption, or another clinical clue?
Fecal calprotectin or lactoferrin	Is inflammatory bowel disease part of the concern?
FIT or screening-related test	Is colorectal screening or bleeding evaluation needed?
SIBO breath test	Is breath testing appropriate for this symptom pattern?
Consumer microbiome report	What does the company claim from detected organisms?

2. Do Not Use a Consumer Report As

- an IBS diagnosis
- a cancer-screening replacement
- a celiac, IBD, infection, or SIBO rule-out
- a guaranteed probiotic selector
- proof that one food is the root cause
- permission to start a very restrictive diet

3. Ask Before Acting

1. Who ordered the test?
2. What clinical question does it answer?
3. Has it been validated for that use?
4. Would the result change care?
5. Are red flags or screening questions being ignored?

4. Better Next Route

If symptoms are persistent, bloody, feverish, dehydrating, nocturnal, severe, or clearly different from your baseline, use clinician-guided testing rather than a consumer microbiome report.