



The Collection of a random urine sample

Information for patients from the Department of Laboratory Medicine

Why do I have to collect this sample?

Your GP, or another healthcare professional, may ask you to collect a random urine sample to help them diagnose a health condition, or to rule one out.

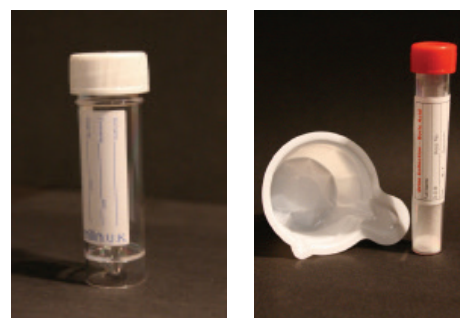
This may be to look for bacteria if you have an infection or it may be to measure some of the waste products that are filtered out of your body into your urine, through your kidneys.

If your urine contains anything unusual this may be because you have an underlying health problem.

What should I do before I collect my sample?

Please read and follow all the instructions you are given before collecting your sample.

Your doctor or nurse will give you a sterile container for the sample (see photo). Please make sure that you label this container with your first name, surname, and date of birth using a biro (if not already completed by your healthcare professional). If you know your NHS number, then please also write this on the container.



If you are given a sample container with a red top (see photo) you will also be given a small, disposable cup. This cup is used to catch your urine and then transfer it to the red-top tube.



What is the powder already in the container?

White-top containers do not contain any powder.

Red-top containers contain a small amount of boric acid powder - do not discard! The boric acid is important and makes sure that the urine is suitable for testing for bacteria. Avoid skin contact and do not eat. Keep the container out of the reach of children!

- If you accidentally get the powder on your skin immediately wash the area with plenty of water.
- If you accidentally get the powder in your eyes immediately rinse them with plenty of water, and go to your nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department as soon as possible.
- If the powder is taken internally (swallowed, inhaled) go to your nearest A&E immediately.

How do I collect my sample?

Your doctor will often ask you to collect an early morning sample, although urine collected at other times of day is acceptable for some tests. An early morning sample is the first sample you pass after waking in the morning, this is the urine that has collected in your bladder overnight.

Unless otherwise advised by your doctor, please follow the procedure below.

- If possible wash between your legs (and your penis if you are a man) with soap and water. Do not use an anti-bacterial wet wipe.
- Wash your hands. Remove the lid of the sample container and set it aside. Do not touch the inside of the lid, the rim, or the inside of the container, as this will cause contamination with the bacteria that is normally found on your skin.
- Start to urinate into the toilet without collecting the first part of the urine that comes out.
- Midway through passing urine move the container into the stream of urine and fill the container about one half to two-thirds full. For a red-top tube containing boric acid powder, catch the urine in the small disposable cup and then transfer the urine to the tube which should be filled to the fill line on the label.
- You may finish urinating into the toilet until your bladder is empty.
- Put on the specimen container lid and screw on tightly. If the outside of the container has got dirty clean the outside with soap and warm water.
- Rinse the disposable plastic cup before throwing it away.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water and dry.
- Write the date and time on the specimen container. Place the specimen container in the plastic bag attached to the laboratory request form and make sure that the bag is properly sealed.

What do I do with the sample when I have finished?

- Make sure the lid is done up tightly and the details on the label are filled in.
- Take the sample and the test request form to your GP surgery or to the pathology laboratory at your nearest East Kent Hospital as soon as possible. If it is impossible to deliver the sample on the same day, keep it somewhere dry and away from heat. Do not refrigerate.
- Samples can be taken to pathology at the William Harvey Hospital (WHH), Ashford, Kent and Canterbury Hospital (K&C), or Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital (QEQM), Margate, between 8.30 am and 7.30 pm, Monday to Friday.

Please follow these instructions carefully. Failure to do so will make it difficult for your doctor to interpret the results and you may have to do it again.

Who do I tell if I have got a problem?

New specimen containers are available from the pathology laboratories at the WHH, K&C, QEQM, or from your GP surgery. Please discuss any problems with sample collection with your healthcare professional.

How will I find out my results?

Your test results will be sent back to the doctor who requested the test. Most results will be available within a week but some may take up to six weeks.

Where can I get further information?

- If you have any further queries about why this test is being done, please speak to the doctor or healthcare professional who requested your test.
- If you have practical questions about your sample collection, please phone the Duty Biochemist on 01233 616287. Laboratory staff cannot discuss your results.

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 783145 or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhft.nhs.uk/patientinformation