

AMMONIA – COLLECTION OF BLOOD SAMPLES

Changes have been made to the collection of blood samples for ammonia analysis in line with national guidelines.

Sample requirements

- **4 mL adult lithium heparin (green top) tube**
- or **1.5 mL paediatric EDTA (purple top) tube**
- **A blank tube is no longer required**

Protocol

1. Please telephone the laboratory at K&CH, QEPMH or WHH in advance, to inform staff that a sample is being sent, and how it is being delivered to the laboratory.
2. For paediatric patients take blood into 1.5 mL paediatric potassium EDTA (purple top) tube. Label the tube with the time of sample collection. Avoid capillary blood samples.
3. For adult patients take blood into 4 mL adult lithium heparin (green top) tube. Label the tube with the time of sample collection.
4. For reliable results, **samples must reach the laboratory within 10 minutes of sample collection**. Ammonia in blood samples is an unstable analyte, thus delay in separation, haemolysis or environmental contamination may increase concentrations.
5. Increased concentrations must be checked on a fresh blood sample that is collected into the correct tube and reaches the laboratory within 10 minutes of sample collection.

Reference

Best Practice Guidelines from the UK Metabolic Biochemistry Network (MetBioNet) version 3 (2018). <http://www.metbio.net/docs/MetBio-Guideline-PERE918546-10-12-2018.pdf>