



# The Collection of an acidified 24 hour urine sample

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.

## Why do I have to collect this sample?

Your doctor has requested the measurement of catecholamines (this test is also called metanephrines, VMA or HMMA) in urine. The rate of excretion of these substances varies during the day. The best way to assess your excretion is to use all the urine from 24 hours.

### **Caution: Hydrochloric acid - irritant**

The bottle for this test contains a small amount of hydrochloric acid – do not discard! The acid is important, and makes sure that the urine is suitable for analysis by the laboratory. Avoid skin contact and do not drink. Do not urinate directly into the bottle. Keep the container out of reach of children!

If you accidentally splash your skin or eyes with some acid immediately wash the area with a lot of water. It may sting but should not cause harm.

If it is taken internally, seek medical advice.

## What do I need to collect my sample?

**Bottle:** You will be given a five litre plastic bottle to collect the sample. The bottle should be large enough to hold all the urine you pass in 24 hours. However, if you expect to produce more than five litres of urine please ask for a second container. Only samples collected into containers provided by the laboratory will be accepted. If you have been asked to collect more than one 24 hour urine sample they must go into separate bottles.

**Jug:** Please do not urinate directly into the bottle. Find a clean, dry, non-metallic container, or jug, which you can use to transfer urine into the 24 hour urine bottle.

## When should I collect my sample?

Choose a day when you are certain you will be able to collect all your urine; this will probably be a day when you are not likely to be going out for a long time.

The collection must be completed 24 hours after it starts, so start the collection at a time that best reflects the time you wish to finish your collection.



You should also be able to deliver your sample to the Pathology Department or GP surgery within one day of finishing your collection.

Female patients should avoid collecting samples while menstruating.

### How do I collect my sample?

1. Write your full first name, surname, and date of birth on the bottle label.
2. To start the collection: empty your bladder completely into the toilet. This is your start time; write it on the bottle.
3. From now on every time you go to the toilet, including during the night, collect all your urine into the bottle. A clean funnel or jug may make this easier. Do not urinate directly into the bottle. Please avoid faecal contamination of the urine by emptying your bladder into the bottle before having a bowel movement. If possible, please keep your sample in a cool place – out of the sun and away from radiators.
4. The next day, at the same time as you started your collection on the previous day (and whether or not you feel you need to) completely empty your bladder and transfer it to the bottle. The time you finish should not vary by more than five or ten minutes from the time you started on the previous day. Write the actual finish date and time on the bottle.

If you accidentally pass any urine into the toilet instead of the bottle, or if the bottle was not big enough, you must start again. You will need a new bottle, or bottles, so you can repeat the collection. New bottles are available from the Pathology Department or by arrangement with your GP surgery.

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

Make sure that the lid is done up tightly. As soon as it is convenient to do so, ideally within a day, bring the sample and the test request form to the Pathology Department at your nearest main East Kent Hospital (William Harvey Hospital, Ashford; Kent and Canterbury Hospital, or Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital, Margate), between 8.30am and 7.30pm, Monday to Friday. Ask at your GP surgery as it may be possible to drop your sample off there.

### Information and test results

If you have any further queries about why this test is being done, please speak to the doctor who requested the test. The results of the test will be sent back to the doctor who requested the test as soon as the analysis is complete. Depending on the tests being done this could be anything from several days to a few weeks.

If you have practical questions about your sample collection, please phone the Duty Biochemist on 01233 616287. Laboratory staff cannot discuss your results.

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 01227 864314, or email [ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Further patient leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site [www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/patientinformation](http://www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/patientinformation)