



# The Collection of a random urine sample

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## Information for patients from the Department of Pathology

Your GP or another healthcare professional has asked you to collect a urine (pee) sample. This leaflet will explain the following.

- Why you have been asked to collect a urine sample.
- What you need to do before you collect your sample.
- How to collect your sample correctly.
- What to do with the sample once you are finished.

We hope this leaflet answers some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of your healthcare team.

### Why do I have to collect this sample?

The sample will help your doctor diagnose a health condition or rule one out. This may be to:

- look for bacteria if you have an infection; or
- measure some of the waste products filtered out of your body through your kidneys and into your urine.

If your urine contains anything unusual, you may have an underlying health problem.

### What should I do before I collect my sample?

**Before collecting your sample, please read and follow all the instructions you have been given.**

Your doctor or nurse will give you a sterile container for your sample. If your doctor or nurse has not already filled in the label, please make sure you complete the label with a biro. Add your:

- first name
- surname, and
- date of birth.
- If you know your NHS number, please also write this on the container.



A red top and a white top sample container



If you are given a sample container for Microbiology testing 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 get the powder on your skin, immediately wash the area with plenty of water.
- If you get the powder in your eyes, immediately rinse them with plenty of water. Go to your nearest Emergency Department as soon as possible.
- If you swallow or inhale the powder, go to your nearest Emergency Department 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. It is the urine that has collected in your bladder overnight.

Unless told otherwise by your doctor, please follow the steps 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. 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. 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. Transfer the urine to the tube. Fill to the fill line on the label.

- You can finish urinating into the toilet, until your bladder is empty.
- Put on the container lid and screw on tightly. If the outside of the container is dirty, clean it with soap and warm water.
- Rinse the disposable plastic cup, before throwing it away.
- Write the date and time on the sample container. Place the container in the plastic bag attached to the laboratory request form. Make sure that the bag is properly sealed.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water, then dry them.

### 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.
- As soon as possible, take the sample and the test request form to:
  - your GP surgery; or
  - the Pathology laboratory at your nearest East Kent Hospital.
- If you can't deliver the sample on the same day, keep it somewhere dry and away from heat or direct sunlight. Do not refrigerate.
- Take your samples to Pathology at one of the following hospitals, between 8.30am and 7.30pm Monday to Friday.
  - Kent and Canterbury Hospital, Canterbury.
  - Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (QEQM) Hospital, Margate.
  - William Harvey Hospital, Ashford.

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

### Who do I tell if I have a problem?

New specimen containers are available from:

- the Pathology laboratories at each of the hospitals listed above; or
- your GP surgery.

Please discuss any sample collection problems with your healthcare professional.

### How will I find out my results?

The laboratory will send the results of your test back to the doctor who requested the test. Most results will be available within 1 week, but some take up to 6 weeks.

### Where can I get further information?

- If you have any queries about why this test is being done, please speak to the doctor 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.

### What do you think of this leaflet?

We welcome feedback, whether positive or negative, as it helps us to improve our care and services.

If you would like to give us feedback about this leaflet, please fill in our short online survey. Either scan the QR code below, or use the web link. We do not record your personal information, unless you provide contact details and would like to talk to us some more.

**Giving feedback about this leaflet**



<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MDOBU4/>

If you would rather talk to someone instead of filling in a survey, please call the Patient Voice Team.

- **Patient Voice Team**  
Telephone: 01227 868605  
Email ([ekhuft.patientvoice@nhs.net](mailto:ekhuft.patientvoice@nhs.net))

**This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.**

**Please let us know:**

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

**You can let us know this by:**

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

**Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments**, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email ([ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)).

**Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital.** Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

**Further patient information leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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