

How to take a urine sample

Version for Patients

- Urine samples may be collected at any time of day, unless your GP or practice nurse advises you otherwise.

When will I need to take a urine sample?

If you have symptoms of a urinary tract infection urine samples should be sent to the **lab** for testing if you fall within any of the following groups:

- Men
- Pregnant women
- >65 years
- Catheter Associated UTI
- Symptoms of upper UTI / pyelonephritis
- Recurrent UTI (2 episodes in 6 months or 3 episodes in 12 months)
- Failed treatment or non-response
- Children under 3 months of age
- Have been asked by your GP or nurse because you have risk factors for antibiotic resistant infection

Samples must be sent to the **lab** in 20ml **red capped universal container**. You can get this from your GP. Please get this to the GP as soon as possible.

If you within any these groups e.g. non-pregnant women under 65 years of age or children in other ages your GP may wish to do a urine dip. For this you will be provided with a white capped container.

To collect a urine sample you should:

1. Label the container with your name, date of birth and the date the sample was taken
2. Wash your hands
3. Clean the pubic area with soap and water but do not put any cream on until after the sample has been collected. Use cotton wool balls or a disposable wipe and swab and wash from front to back. This will prevent contamination of the specimen from faeces or bacteria normally present on the skin.
4. You will be provided with a red capped contained and a collection container or a red capped and white capped container. The urine sample can be collected in the collection or white capped container.
5. Depending on what is feasible for you
 - Ideally collect the sample in the middle of passing urine "mid-stream" (rather than at the start) in the sterile white screw top (universal) container.

- A sterile container used in the toilet or commode may be used if collection in the universal container is challenging. Please discuss this with your GP practice if needed
 - If you rely on continence pads please discuss this with your GP practice
6. Transfer the urine to a sterile 20ml red capped universal container
 7. Screw the lid of the container shut
 8. Wash your hands thoroughly
 9. Check the details on the label are correct
 10. Samples should be taken to the GP practice as soon as possible, within 1 hour.

Storing a urine sample

If you can't hand the urine sample to the GP within 1 hour, you should put the container in a sealed plastic bag then store it in the fridge at around 4C. Do not keep it for longer than 24 hours. The bacteria in the urine sample can multiply if it is not kept in a fridge. If this happens, it could affect the test results.

What is a mid-stream urine sample?

A mid-stream urine sample means you don't collect the first or last part of urine that comes out. This reduces the risk of the sample being contaminated with bacteria from the skin around the urethra, the tube that carries urine out of the body.