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Version:1.2

Instructions for Patients

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Site Location:

Patient Information – A guide to having a blood test

There are a number of reasons why your Doctor may request that you have a blood sample taken. This might be to help with a diagnosis, to monitor treatment, or to exclude certain conditions. In most cases these samples will be taken by a procedure known as Phlebotomy or Venepuncture, i.e. taking blood from a vein. The information given below will explain the procedure in more detail.

How is a blood sample taken?

The procedure is performed by a trained member of staff, usually a phlebotomist, doctor or nurse. A tourniquet is placed around your arm just above the elbow, the area is cleaned and then a small needle is inserted into a vein on the inner arm. Blood is withdrawn into sample bottles and the needle is then removed. Pressure is applied at the site with a piece of cotton wool or gauze until the bleeding has stopped and then a small plaster is applied. Please tell the person taking the blood if you are allergic to sticking plaster.

Will it hurt?

Putting the needle into the arm involves a pin prick sensation but after that the rest of the procedure should be quite painless. Some people continue to feel some discomfort or pain and we are not sure why. It is probably because of nerves under the surface of the skin but this should settle quite quickly. If not you should go to see your GP or a member of hospital staff.

Will it bruise?

You may get a bruise or a small lump after having blood taken. This will usually settle by itself and fade away in time.

Some conditions may increase the risk of bruising. These include:-

- Drugs such as Warfarin or Aspirin
- Conditions such as a bleeding disorder or low platelets (thrombocytopenia)
- When it is hard to get a vein, for example if the arm is swollen (oedema)
- Elderly patients

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To help reduce this risk as much as possible, please tell the person taking the blood if you have any such conditions or if you have had a problem in the past after a blood test.

Pressing firmly on the site until the bleeding has stopped should help to reduce any bruising. If possible keep the arm slightly raised and avoid too much movement of the arm, such as lifting or carrying heavy parcels, for an hour or so after the blood test.

Should you experience excessive bruising or prolonged bleeding, apply firm pressure to the area. A few ice cubes wrapped in a towel may help reduce any swelling and bruising.

Bruising can look very dramatic and some people may find this worrying especially if it appears away from the site where the blood has been taken or is visible for a few days following the procedure. However, it is usually harmless and will go away in time.

What happens to the blood samples?

The samples are tested in the pathology laboratory. The results of these tests are sent to the person who asked for the sample to be taken. Some samples may need to be sent away for further tests or stored in case we need to refer to them in the future.

By law we are expected, to protect any information we have about you. All of your test results are stored and treated confidentially. No-one except the medical teams looking after you can look at, or have access to, your test results without your permission.

If you have any questions about this procedure please ask the member of staff taking the sample or the person responsible for your care.

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24 Hour Urine Collection Instructions

1. You must collect all of the urine produced by your body over a 24 hour period
2. On the day of collection, pass the first urine on waking as normal into the toilet – **DO NOT KEEP** this sample. Write the time and date you do this on the bottle – This is the start date and time.
3. From this point on and for the next 24 hours, you **MUST COLLECT ALL** of your urine in the container. If you pass urine during the night, this must also be collected.
4. The following morning collect your urine for a final time, exactly 24hours after the start time. You must produce this final collection, regardless of whether you feel the need to empty your bladder. Write the finish date and time on the bottle.
5. Label the collection bottle with your personal details including your full name, date of birth and NHS number if you have it. Also add the name and location of the doctor who requested the 24 hour urine collection. This will allow the laboratory to return your results to the correct location. Please note that if the collection bottle has already been prelabelled with an electronic sticker containing this information, you do not need to add further personal details.
6. Store the collection bottle in a cool place until you can transport the finished collection to the laboratory or your GP surgery as you have been instructed.
7. Please ensure the cap is closed and tightened securely to prevent leakage in transit.
8. Please ensure that you also deliver any request card or form that you should have been provided together with your specimen.

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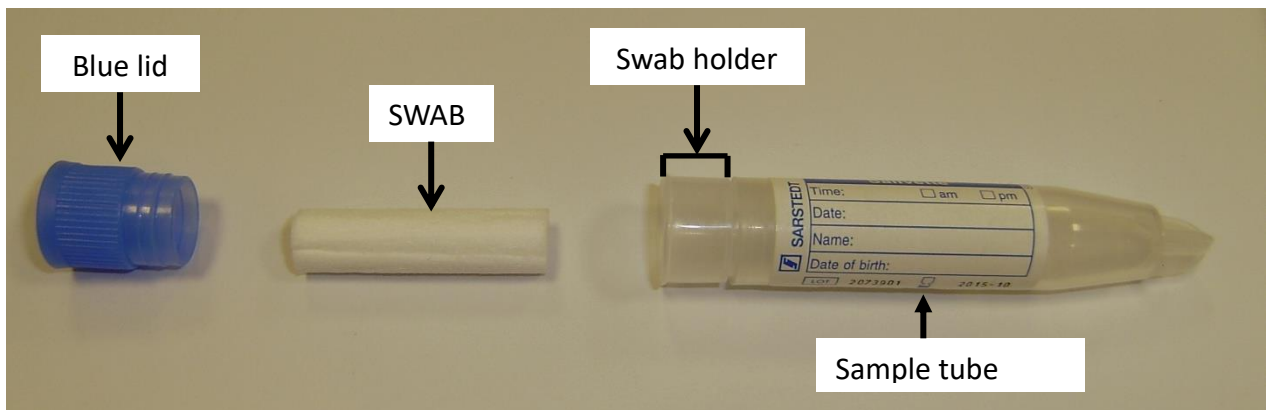
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Saliva Collection Instructions

1. Collect the saliva at the time specified by your Doctor. If a morning or evening collection, ensure collection is performed **before** you brush your teeth. **Do not** eat or drink for 30minutes before performing the collection.
2. Remove the blue lid and remove the swab from the device. Do not remove the swab holder from the sample tube.



3. Gently chew the swab for approx. 1 minute or until you feel that you can no longer prevent yourself from swallowing the saliva produced.
4. Replace the swab back into the sample tube and firmly replace the lid.
5. Complete the label on the tube, ensuring your name and date of birth and the date and time of collection are clearly stated.
6. Place the tube inside the plastic bag along with the request form from your Doctor. Seal the plastic bag to ensure the contents of the bag are secure.
7. Return to the laboratory. If necessary, store the sample in the refrigerator until the sample can be returned to the laboratory. The sample should be returned to the laboratory as soon as possible the following day.