

Urine Samples Policy

Due to updated clinical guidelines, we are no longer able to accept urine samples from our patients unless the patient has been asked to provide one by a clinician.

If you feel you have a water/urinary tract infection, please contact us to ask for a call back to discuss the possible infection first. If the clinician feels a sample is needed, they will ask you to bring one in.

If a patient presents a urine sample to the reception team, the team has been instructed by the doctors to check that the sample has been requested. If it has not been requested, a phone call between the patient and a clinician will be arranged to clinically assess the situation.

We cannot accept any urine sample that has not been specifically requested. We cannot store urine samples for reasons of safety and clinical effectiveness. Any samples left in our samples collection box without clinical approval will not be processed.

What are urine samples used for?

Your GP or another healthcare professional may ask for a urine sample to help them diagnose or rule out health conditions. Urine contains waste products that are filtered out of the body. If it contains anything unusual, this may indicate an underlying health condition. Common reasons for being asked to provide a urine sample include

- to diagnose or monitor certain conditions such as type 2 diabetes
- to check for a [urinary tract infection \(UTI\)](#)
- to check for a [sexually transmitted infection \(STI\)](#)
- to confirm that you are [pregnant](#)

What do I need to know about collecting a urine sample?

If you are in the practice your GP or nurse will give you a container and explain how to collect a urine sample. On certain occasions you might be asked to provide a urine sample by letter or over the phone. In these instances, you can collect a sample container from our reception desk.

To collect a clean urine sample you should:

- label the container with your name, date of birth and the date
- wash your hands
- wash your genitalia to avoid contamination

- start to urinate but don't collect the first part of urine that comes out
- collect a sample of urine 'mid-stream' in a sample container provided by the practice
- screw the lid of the container shut
- wash your hands thoroughly

If the sample is clean and properly labelled you can drop the sample container in at the reception desk. If you can't hand your urine sample in within an hour, you should keep it in a sealed plastic bag in the fridge (for no longer than 24 hours) to prevent bacteria multiplying and affecting the test results.

You can collect a urine sample at any time of day unless your GP or practice nurse advises you otherwise. If your doctor gives you any other instructions, you should also follow these.

What is a mid-stream urine sample?

A mid-stream urine sample means that you don't collect the first part of urine that comes out or the last part. This reduces the risk of the sample being contaminated with bacteria from:

- your hands
- the skin around the urethra (tube that carries urine out of the body)
- How long will I have to wait for a result?

Many urine samples can be quickly analysed using dipstick analysis so you should know the result the same day or within 24 hours.

For some more complex tests we need to send your urine sample off for laboratory testing at one of the local hospitals. In these instances, it might take up to 5 days for results to come back to the practice. These are sent electronically and are checked every day by our GPs. If there is a cause for concern, we will phone or write to you within 24 hours of receiving the result. We will not routinely inform you if the results are normal.

When is treatment with antimicrobials appropriate?

Urinary tract infections are among the most common infections in primary care but predicting the probability of UTIs using symptoms and point-of-care tests can be inaccurate, leading to inappropriate antimicrobial use. It is our duty to clarify when it is appropriate to prescribe an antimicrobial; and minimising the emergence of antibiotic resistance in the community therefore we require a clinician to speak to you before bringing a sample in and before you will be prescribed antibiotics.