

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

# Collection of a mid-stream urine (MSU) sample

### Introduction

Your GP/doctor/nurse has asked you to provide a MSU sample for testing at the laboratory and should have given you one of the sterile containers below, a request form (if required) and a sample bag. These instructions tell you how to take a MSU sample.



If you have not been provided with one of the containers above, then you should request one from your GP/doctor/nurse.

**WARNING:** The red topped container contains a preservative that **MUST** not be consumed or removed from the container.

### What is a mid-stream urine sample?

A MSU sample is the middle portion of a stream of urine that you produce. Urine is normally sterile (no bacteria are present). If bacteria are found in the sample it means the urine is infected. A MSU sample is best as the first portion of a stream of urine may be contaminated with bacteria normally present on the skin.

### Timing of the sample

You can collect the urine sample at any time of day, unless your GP/doctor/nurse has advised otherwise.

Because of the potential to contaminate urine with bacteria and cells from the surrounding skin, it is important to first clean the genitalia:

- **Women:** Hold open your labia (entrance to the vagina) and clean from front to back.
- **Men:** Pull back your foreskin and wipe the tip of the penis.

### How to collect a mid-stream sample of urine:

1. Remove the screw cap from the container, being careful not to touch the inner surfaces of the container or cap. Do not tip out the white powder.
2. **Women:** Hold open your labia (entrance to the vagina).  
**Men:** Pull back your foreskin.
3. Start to pass some urine directly into the toilet, wait for a second or two, and without stopping the stream of urine collect some urine in the container. **If using a red top container, ensure it is filled up to the fill line.**
4. Finish passing the rest of your urine into the toilet.
5. Tightly screw the lid back onto the container and wipe off the outside of the container if required.
6. Place the fully labelled container into the sample bag provided and seal the bag.
7. Wash your hands with soap and warm water, rinse, and dry.

If you are unable to produce sufficient urine to fill the red topped container to the fill line, please speak with your GP/doctor/nurse and request a white top container.

**What do I do if I'm finding it difficult to use the sterile container provided?**

If you are unable to fill the sterile container directly then you can use a different container (e.g. a glass jug or jar) and then pour the urine into the sterile container. Make sure the container you choose to use is very clean: wash it thoroughly and use boiling water to rinse it out before use.

**Where do I deliver the sample to?**

After collecting the sample, it should ideally be delivered along with the request form to your GP surgery or the Pathology Department at King's Mill Hospital or Newark Hospital within two hours of the sample being taken.

The Pathology Department at King's Mill Hospital is found by following the signs to the Bereavement Centre and the MRI Scanner. The department's main door is situated on the left near the top of the corridor. There is a free 15 minute drop off/collection zone outside King's Mill Hospital's main reception and volunteers are available in the entrance foyer to give directions.

The Pathology Department at Newark Hospital is situated on the ground floor next to the Mercia Doughty Preoperative Assessment Unit. When you arrive at Pathology, you should take your sample to the delivery hatch at the reception. The staff will check your details and take the sample from you.

You are free to leave once you have handed in your sample as your results will be forwarded to your referring doctor.

Site maps and directions to King's Mill Hospital and Newark Hospital can be found on the Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust website – please see 'Further sources of information'.

**How should I store my sample?**

The sample should ideally be delivered to your GP or Pathology Department as soon as possible after the sample has been taken.

If you cannot deliver the sample immediately it should be stored in a fridge around 4°C, but for no longer than 24 hours. Place the sample in a further plastic bag before putting it in the fridge.

**Where is my sample tested?**

The sample is processed at the Pathology Department at King's Mill Hospital.

**How do I get my results?**

Your results will normally be sent back to your referring doctor (GP or consultant) approximately two to three days after the Pathology Department has received your sample. Results are not given out by the Pathology Department to patients in order to protect patient confidentiality.

**What happens to my sample after it has been tested?**

Once your sample has been tested and a result has been sent back to your referring Doctor, the remaining sample is disposed of with other laboratory waste.

**Useful information**

Lab Tests Online:

<https://labtestsonline.org.uk/tests/urine-culture>

**Further sources of information**

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

**Patient Experience Team (PET)**

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King's Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

**Email:** [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net)

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet (if relevant) please email [sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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