

# INSTRUCTIONS TO PATIENTS BEFORE LABORATORY TESTS

## Test Preparation: Your Role

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One of the most important factors in determining the [accuracy and reliability](#) of your lab test is you, the patient. After all, it is a sample from your body (blood, urine, or some other specimen ;) on which the test will be performed. Therefore, it is essential that you do the following to ensure that the results will be useful and interpreted correctly by your doctor.

- Follow instructions, if there are any, to prepare for the specific test you are having performed;
- Alert the person collecting your sample if you have deviated from the instructions and how;
- Inform your doctor of any medications (including vitamins and supplements) you might currently be taking or foods you have eaten within the day prior to the test. This information will be useful if your doctor has any questions about your test results.

**For Routine Blood Collection** – Patient should report to Pathology Lab with CHSS Card at 8.00 am on working days. Token numbers given to the patients (by the Dispensary or Hospital Doctors) are displayed at the blood collection centre. Patients are strictly called as per the token numbers.

## Common Queries regarding Patient Preparation for Investigations:

### **Q.1 Do I need to come Fasting?**

Ans: For most blood tests blood is collected after overnight fast ie no food intake for 10-12 hours. Tea, coffee, alcohol intake and smoking are not permitted during this period. Reasonable amount of water intake is permitted.

### **Q.2 How to come for Blood test for diabetes?**

Ans: For fasting Blood Glucose - Overnight Fasting is essential  
For post-prandial Blood Glucose- Blood is collected 2hrs after a meal (break-fast or lunch)

### **Instructions for Known Diabetic Patients –**

- For fasting Blood Glucose- Blood is collected after overnight Fasting
- After collection of this fasting sample, a known diabetic patient should have his usual medication and breakfast.
- A post-lunch blood glucose test is done in diabetics ie blood is collected 2hr after lunch. So patients are advised to go to the Pathology Unit with 2 tiffin boxes – for breakfast and lunch and with all the routine medicines.

### **Q. 3 How to collect urine for laboratory examination?**

Ans: This is one of the simplest laboratory test to be made and yet one of the most important test. Urine analysis is important in study of kidney function. It may also be collected for pregnancy test.

**Patient preparation:**

Ideally private parts should be cleaned with soap and plenty of clean water and dried. Contamination with local discharges is to be avoided.

**Types of specimen and collection:****For routine and microscopy:**

The first specimen in the morning is usually the best for most of the tests including pregnancy test. Discard some amount of initial and last portion of urine and collect the middle portion (mid-stream sample) in a container.

Round, wide mouth bottle of 25-50 ml capacity with screw caps are suitable. These bottles are to be cleaned properly, rinsed with tap water, drained and dried. If microbiological examination and culture is to be done, the container must be sterilized; these are available in the pathology unit at BARC Hospital.

**24 hour urine collection:**

This sample usually required for protein quantification or for testing other excretory functions of the kidney. Collect urine in 2-4 L container. At 6 am or any other convenient hour when patient gets up in the morning, ask him/her to empty the bladder and discard this urine. Collect all urine passed thereafter in the container. Continue to collect urine till the patient gets up next morning and passes urine. Include this next day's sample to the total volume of urine. Place this sample in refrigerator until it's delivered to the laboratory for further analysis. Do not add any preservative of your own. This may interfere with certain test results.

**Q. 4 Why sputum examination is done and how to collect sputum for laboratory examination?**

Ans: In various respiratory infections like tuberculosis and pneumonia or even certain cancers, sputum examination is very important.

Sputum is different from saliva. It is the material coughed up from throat and/or lungs.

Sample collected in early morning is preferable as it is obtained from respiratory passage. Rinse mouth and teeth with sterile water. Consequently 3-4 samples per day have to be collected during the day. Specimens should be collected preferably after deep explosive cough. This test may have to be repeated for few consecutive days or as per the physician's advice. 60-100 ml, wide mouthed, straight sided bottle with screw caps or plastic covers are the best.

**Q. 5 Why stool examination is done and how to collect stool for laboratory examination?**

Ans: It is needed for diagnosis of worms or parasites infestation or for the presence of blood or certain chemicals.

Patient ideally must not receive iron or any other metallic preparations for 5 days before collection of stool sample. Anthelmintic drugs or barium studies should also be avoided for 2 weeks before the test.

Any type of wide mouth and tight screw capped disposable container can be used.

**Q. 6 How to collect semen for analysis?**

Ans: The semen should be collected after 3 days and no longer than 5 days of abstinence. The person should pass urine and empty bladder before ejaculation. Semen should be collected by masturbation in screw capped plastic container and delivered to the laboratory within one hour of collection while being kept close to the body to maintain temperature during transit interval. Please also note the time of collection of the sample.