

**Microbiology Department Patient information sheet:****Patients Guide to Taking Specimens****Urine sample**

Your GP or other healthcare professional may ask for a urine sample to aid diagnosis or to rule out certain health problems. Your GP should provide specific instructions on how to collect the sample and where to deliver it to.

Urine may be used to diagnose:

- Urinary tract infection
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy

**Collecting your urine sample**

You should:

Collect your urine sample in the container provided by your GP. You may be given a red topped, boric acid pot or a yellow topped pot depending on what examinations are required.



Boric acid urine  
collection pot

**Red topped boric acid containers**

These contain boric acid powder as a preservative. The presence of boric acid helps to maintain the microbiological quality of the specimen, it prevents cell degradation and overgrowth of organisms that can occur if the sample is not analysed within 4 hours of collection. Boric acid preservative holds the bacterial population steady for 48–96 hours, and other cellular components remain intact.

- Do not discard the white powder and fill the boric acid container to the line marked and mix well. This will ensure the correct concentration of preservative.
- While the powder in the container is non-hazardous if used correctly it is a chemical and can cause skin irritation so avoid skin contact with the white powder, do not eat and keep out of reach of children.

- In the case of accidental skin exposure to the powder, wash immediately with plenty of soap and water.
- If you get the powder in your eyes then rinse immediately with plenty of water and attend the Emergency Department as soon as possible.
- If the powder is eaten then attend the Emergency Department immediately.

## What is a mid-stream urine sample (MSU)?

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

- If not already completed, label the container with your name, date of birth and date of sample collection
- Wash your hands
- Start to urinate but don't collect the first part of the urine that comes out
- Collect a sample of urine (mid-stream) that comes out in the sterile container provided
- Screw the lid of the container shut
- Wash your hands again thoroughly.

If you can't hand your sample in within an hour you should keep it in the fridge at around 4°C in a sealed plastic bag for no longer than 24 hours. If the sample is not refrigerated, and kept at room temperature, bacteria in it may multiply and produce an incorrect result.

Samples in boric acid containers do not require storage in the fridge.

## Results

The majority of urine results will be reported back to the requesting Doctor within 48 hours.

**Please note** - results cannot be given over the telephone patients will be advised of the result by the requesting clinician i.e GP or Consultant.

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**To provide the excellent care we would expect for our families.**

The Royal Bournemouth Hospital,  
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The Bournemouth Hospital Charity raises funds for the Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals to enhance patient care and purchase items which directly benefit patients and staff above and beyond that which can be funded by the NHS alone. If you would like to contribute to the Bournemouth Hospital Charity please contact them on **01202 704060**, email **charity@rbch.nhs.uk** or visit **www.bournemouthhospitalcharity.org**.

If you have any queries or concerns about your care at the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) would be happy to help you and can be contacted on **01202 704886/704301** or **pals@rbch.nhs.uk**.

If you would like this leaflet printed in a larger font, please contact the Communications Team on **01202 704905** during the office hours of 8.30am-5pm Monday - Friday.



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