

# Patients Guide to Taking Specimens

## Microbiology Department Patient information

### 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 disease
- Pregnancy

### Collecting your urine sample

You should:

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



Boric acid urine collection  
pot-Monovette



## Green 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 A&E as soon as possible.
- If the powder is eaten then attend A&E immediately.

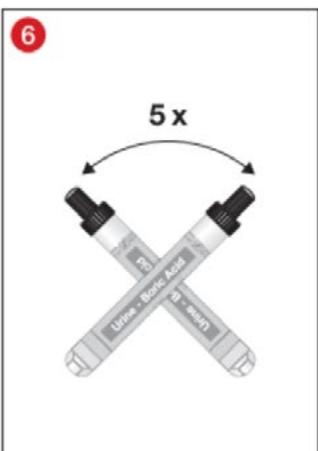
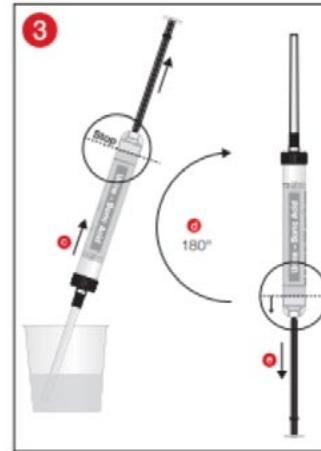
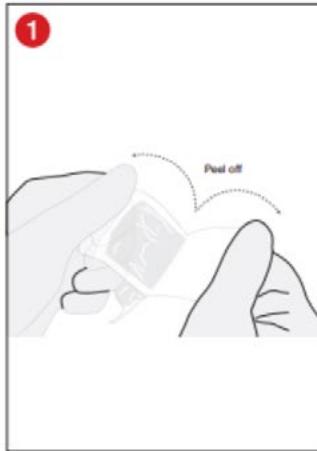
## What is a mid-stream urine sample (MSU)?

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).

## How to collect a mid-stream urine sample

- 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 cup or yellow topped container provided

Follow instructions below to fill Green topped Monovette



- Wash your hands again thoroughly.

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

## Non-preserved samples

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.

## 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.

---

The Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7DW

Author: Nathan Bourne Date: May 2025 Version: Three Review date: May 2028 Ref: 048/24