

Urine Collection

Random Urine Collections

Collect the **first-morning** specimen (most concentrated) for a routine urinalysis test unless the physician specifies differently. Urine specimens to be examined for malignant cells (Cytology) should be **second-morning** specimens.

Timed Urine Collections

A wide variety of laboratory tests may be performed on urine. Most frequently, a patient's urine is collected for a total of 24 hours; but shorter or longer timed collections may be used, depending on particular tests.

Before starting a timed urine collection, contact the laboratory to inquire if the ordered test requires a preservative. **The laboratory provides all containers regardless of whether a preservative is needed.** Care must be exercised in handling bottles containing preservatives since some preservatives are strong acids and will cause skin burns if spilled.

A timed urine collection is started by having the patient void. This specimen should be discarded. Begin timing at this point, and collect all urine specimens for the designated period of time. It is extremely important that all urine be saved and placed into container provided. Test results are calculated on the basis of the time frame involved, and unless all urine is saved, results will not be accurate.

Urine containers containing a preservative should not be refrigerated during collection. Store these containers in a safe place out of the reach of children and pets for duration of collection. Urine containers that do not contain a preservative should be kept in the refrigerator or on ice for duration of collection.

Significant problems are often encountered when the patient has recently received various drugs or other chemical substances in the course of treatment or other diagnostic procedures. As a general rule of thumb, it is advised that any urine collection be carried out before any drugs or X-ray dyes are administered; or, at a minimum, the patient should be off all drugs for at least 3 days prior to initiation of urine collection.

Urine for Culture

This specimen is most commonly collected by obtaining a midstream flow by the clean-catch technique.

Collect a clean-catch, midstream urine specimen as follows:

Males

1. Prepare towelette by opening packages (do not remove towelettes until ready to use), and place them on sink. Take top off plastic urine container, and set it on edge of sink. Set towelettes and container so that they can be reached while urinating.
2. Holding back foreskin with 1 hand, if necessary, use first towelette to wash end of penis. Discard first towelette in wastebasket.
3. Continue holding back foreskin and gently rinse end of penis using second and third towelette, discarding them in wastebasket when done.
4. Continue holding back foreskin and begin to urinate into toilet.

Females

1. Prepare towelettes by opening packages (do not remove towelettes until ready to use), and place them on sink. Take top off plastic urine container, and set it on edge of sink. Set towelettes and container so that they can be reached while urinating.
2. Pull panties below knees so they will not interfere with urine collection. With 2 fingers of 1 hand, hold outer folds of vagina apart. With other hand, gently wash vaginal area from front to back, using first towelette. After this step, throw away first towelette in wastebasket.
3. Still holding outer vaginal skin away from opening through which urination takes place, rinse area from front to back using towelette #2, discard, and then repeat with towelette #3.
4. Continue holding outer vaginal folds apart and begin to urinate into toilet. Lean slightly forward so that urine flows directly down without running along skin.

After first few teaspoons, place sterile container under stream of urine and collect as much urine as possible. After finishing, tighten cap on container securely, and wash any spilled urine from outside of container. Label container with patient's name (first and last), medical record number, date and actual time of collection, and type of specimen.