

## **ANDROLOGY (SEMINOLOGY) LABORATORY**

Ground Floor, Department of Reproductive Medicine, Royal Hospital for Women



**BY APPOINTMENT ONLY: Phone (02) 9382 6643**

Laboratory hours: Monday to Saturday..... variable times  
(Please ask for available hours when making your appointment)  
Public Holidays..... closed

### **PATIENT INSTRUCTION SHEET FOR THE COLLECTION OF SEMEN**

For the initial evaluation of male fertility, two (or more) semen samples should be collected for assessment. The abstinence period for each test should be 2 to 5 days unless otherwise specified by your doctor. If additional samples are required, the number of days of sexual abstinence should be as constant as possible at each visit. Your doctor will indicate how many samples they would like tested.

***For an optimal semen analysis we require you to collect a “good” semen sample. Please read carefully before collecting the sample. If you do not understand what is required, or have any questions, please read the frequently asked question’s on the reverse side or contact the laboratory.***

#### **Semen Collection Instructions**

1. Abstain from ejaculation for 2 to 5 days prior to your appointment. However, if a sperm chromatin structure assay (DNA integrity test) has been requested, abstain for 2 to 3 days only.
2. The semen sample must be collected by masturbation without using a lubricant directly into a sterile container (a suitable sterile collection container can be collected from the laboratory, a pharmacy or your doctor may provide it for you).
3. It is important to collect the total volume of the ejaculate. If you miss the first part or large portion of the ejaculate (do not try to recover spilt or missed sample portions from skin, floor or other surfaces), contact the laboratory and we will organise another appointment.
4. To minimize bacterial contamination, remove the lid from the container just before you start and replace it quickly as possible after you have produced the sample. Place the container in a specimen bag or zip lock plastic bag.
5. Do not collect the semen using a condom, oral sex or by interrupted sexual intercourse.
6. Ensure you label the container with your full name, date of birth, date and time of collection.
7. If you wish to produce the specimen at home, it must be delivered to the laboratory within 40 minutes from the time of collection. You or your partner can deliver the sample to the laboratory.
8. Sample transportation conditions are important. During the journey carry the sample in your pants or jacket pocket or close to your body to help maintain a suitable temperature (between 20 to 37°C).
9. The laboratory has a dedicated facility/room for you to collect a semen specimen. We recommend using this facility to limit changes in temperature and transport delays affecting sperm quality (if you live greater than 30 minutes travel time, please consider possible traffic delays).
10. A signed request form or letter from your doctor and your Medicare details will be required at the time of specimen reception. Samples will not be accepted without an accompanying doctor’s request form and without an appointment.

## Frequently Asked Questions



**Q. Do I need an appointment?**

A. Yes, you will require an appointment whether collecting a sample at home or at the hospital.

**Q. Can I collect a sample on site or do I need to collect it at home?**

A. We have a dedicated clean and tidy collection room for you to collect a sample. We prefer that you collect your sample at the laboratory. If you wish to collect the sample at home, it is OK as long as you follow the instructions on the previous page and you can reach the laboratory within 40 minutes of the collection.

**Q. Can my partner deliver the sample for me?**

A. Yes, just fill in the semen collection details and sign the Medicare assignment section prior to delivery.

**Q. What do you mean by abstinence period and why is it so important for testing?**

A. Abstinence is the time between ejaculations whether it is sexual intercourse, masturbation or wet dream. Too short an abstinence period may not allow for a sufficient recovery period leading to a low seminal volume and low sperm count. Too long an abstinence period can lead to excessive numbers of sperm, comprising an increased older sperm population with poorer performance, which may have a negative influence on your fertility assessment.

**Q. What happens if I can't produce a semen sample for or at my appointment?**

A. This happens from time to time. Please don't feel embarrassed or overly concerned, contact a staff member and we will organise another appointment time.

**Q. What happens if I miss or spill the semen sample for or at my appointment?**

A. Unfortunately this also happens from time to time. Please don't try to recover the sample from your skin, floor or other surrounding surfaces. Contact a staff member and we will organise another appointment as incomplete samples are not suitable for quality semen analysis.

**Q. Why can't I use a lubricant whilst I masturbate?**

A. Personal lubricants, saliva, vaginal secretions, soaps, etc. contaminating the sample can damage or kill sperm, and therefore influence the semen analysis results.

**Q. Why can't I produce a sample using a condom or by interrupted sex?**

A. Condoms cannot be used because their lubricant is spermicidal. Withdrawal is unacceptable because the first sperm-rich part of the ejaculate is easily lost and the sample can easily become contaminated with vaginal secretions.

**Q. Where or from whom do I collect my results?**

A. Results can be collected from and reviewed with your requesting medical practitioner.

**Special Circumstances - please call the laboratory**

- Where necessary special non-toxic condoms are available to help with sample collections.
- If your doctor has requested a retrograde ejaculation test please let us know when you make your appointment so an additional instruction sheet can be sent to you.

**If you are unsure or have any questions about semen collection for this procedure please contact the laboratory on (02) 9382 6643.**

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