



Collecting a urine sample

This information sheet from Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) explains how to collect a clean urine sample for testing. If you have any questions, please ask your child's doctor or nurse.

Why does my child need to give a urine sample?

Urine is a waste product produced by the kidneys, so testing it can show if the kidneys are not working well. For instance, if there is protein in the urine sample, the kidneys may not be filtering it out well. If there is sugar in the urine sample, this might be an indicator that sugar levels in the blood are too high. If your child has a urine infection, the bacteria may be present in the urine sample. Testing a urine sample is usually the first stage in carrying out a general assessment, before blood tests are needed.



How to collect a urine sample

- Make sure you do not touch the inside of the urine sample bottle or test tube or the top edge – you may introduce bacteria which could contaminate the sample.
- Only use the urine sample bottle or test tube provided – if you have not been given one, ask at your family doctor (GP) surgery.
- The bottle or test tube does not need to be completely full – usually a small sample is enough for testing.
- Children and young people who are potty or toilet trained

Collect the equipment you will need:

- Clean container or foil bowl
- Urine sample bottle or test tube as provided
- Clean funnel or oral syringe (if required)
 1. Wash the genital area and pat dry with a clean towel
 2. Wash your hands with soap and water
 3. Ask your child to start weeing and then use the container to catch their wee
 4. Do not collect the first few drops – wait a second or two before starting to collect
 5. Pour the sample from the container into the urine sample bottle (using a funnel or syringe if needed)
 6. Screw the lid on tightly and give to your doctor



Babies and children in nappies or pads Using cotton wool or gauze

Collect the equipment required:

- Cotton wool or gauze
- Syringe
- Urine sample bottle or test tube as provided
 1. Wash the genital area and pat dry with a clean towel
 2. Wash your hands with soap and water
 3. Put a thick layer of cotton wool or gauze inside your child's nappy
 4. Wait 10 minutes and check whether it is wet
 5. If it is wet, use the syringe provided to draw up the urine to put in the urine sample bottle or test tube.
 6. If it not wet, replace the nappy and wait another 10 minutes before checking. Replace the pad every 30 minutes to avoid contamination.
 7. Screw the lid on tightly and give to your doctor

Using a urine collection bag

Collect the equipment required:

- Urine collection bags
- Urine sample bottle or test tube as provided
 1. Wash the genital area and pat dry with a clean towel
 2. Wash your hands with soap and water
 3. Attach the bag around your child's genitals using the sticky strip
 4. Check the bag regularly and remove when your child has voided.
 5. Cut the corner off the bag and pour urine into the urine sample bottle or test tube.
 6. Screw the lid on tightly and put in the biological hazard bag you have been given

When do we get the results?

Quite often, the doctor or nurse will test the urine straightaway using a testing strip. This contains chemicals that react with the urine to show if there is protein present for instance. Once the doctor or nurse has dipped the strip into the urine sample, they wait a few seconds until the colours develop and then compare it with the colours on the bottle to get the results.

Occasionally, particularly if an infection has been identified, the doctor or nurse may send the sample off to the laboratory for testing. The laboratory will grow the bacteria in the sample to try to work out the particular type. This means that any antibiotic your child has will work specifically against the bacteria present.

If you have any questions,
please ask your doctor or nurse.