



Northumbria Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Post-vasectomy Semen Analysis Patient Guidance

Issued by Microbiology Department



Introduction

At the time of your vasectomy, your doctor will have provided you with a copy of this form, a laboratory request form/bag and an empty container.

This form provides you with guidance on how to ensure you provide a viable sample for testing.

Why do you need a post-vasectomy sample?

Vasectomy is one of the safest and most effective means of birth control. It is not possible to consider a vasectomy as successful until a post-vasectomy sample of semen is analysed.

Patients are advised to continue with an alternative form of contraception until they have had the results of the post-vasectomy sample.

When should I provide my sample?

For some weeks after your vasectomy, there is a risk that sperm can survive in the tubes leading from your testicles. If the sample is produced too early then there is a higher chance of sperm being detected on the test.

It is advised that you should provide your specimen 16 weeks following your vasectomy. In addition to this timescale you should ensure that you have ejaculated at least 20 times between your surgery and the time of your specimen.

It is important to note that you should have abstained from intercourse/masturbation within the previous 48 hours (but not more than 7 days) prior to taking your sample.

How do I collect the sample?

- Ensure your full name, date of birth; hospital number and NHS number are marked clearly on the container.
- Warm the empty container to body temperature by putting it in a trouser or internal jacket pocket for around 10 minutes.
- Wash your hands and genitals but do not wash the container.
- The sample must be collected by masturbation only. You must ejaculate directly into the container. Do not use a condom/contraceptive sheath as many of these contain spermicide and are designed to kill sperm.
- All of the semen must be collected in the container. If any of the sample is spilled, the test could be inaccurate – live sperm could have been in the portion of sample which is not tested. This could lead to inaccurate results.
- Once complete please ensure the container lid is screwed on tightly.
- Write the date and time of the sample on the container label and put the container into the specimen bag which is attached to the laboratory form and seal the bag.
- Bring this completed form with you when delivering your sample to the laboratory.
- You must deliver the sample to the laboratory within one hour of the sample being taken.
- Sperm is sensitive to extremes in temperature so you must ensure that the sample is kept at body temperature. Place the container in a trouser or internal jacket pocket on your journey to the laboratory.

How do I deliver my sample?

- The laboratory will accept post-vasectomy samples between 8.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am - 4.00pm Friday (excluding bank holidays).
- The sample must be delivered within one hour of collection to:
Pathology specimen reception
North Tyneside General Hospital
Rake Lane
North Shields
Tyne and Wear
NE29 8NH
- Pathology specimen reception is signposted within the hospital. Our hospital volunteers at the main entrance will be more than happy to direct you if needed.

Could my sample be rejected by the laboratory?

Your sample could be rejected by the laboratory if you have not adhered to the strict criteria:

- Your name, date of birth, hospital number, NHS number and date/time of sample must be documented on the sample container
- Your sample should not have leaked in transit
- Your sample can only be accepted if it is in the correct container i.e. the one provided to you at the time of your vasectomy. These containers have been tested for toxicity and other containers may affect the results of your test.

How do I get my results?

The results of your sample will be sent back to the person who requested the test. This could be your GP or hospital consultant. Results should be available in around 7 days after you submit your sample.

Please be advised that the laboratory is unable to give out results directly to the patient.

Remember – you should continue to use other forms of birth control until you are advised otherwise by your GP or hospital consultant.

Processing of the sample:

Your sample will be processed by North Tyneside microbiology laboratory. If you require any further information please contact 0191 2932528.

Laboratories processing semen post vasectomy samples (PVSA) are accredited through a national scheme (UKAS).

This accreditation process has recently changed. Currently there is no laboratory in the North-East which has met this new standard where we could refer your specimen to.

Although North Tyneside microbiology laboratory is not accredited we have made every effort possible to ensure that your sample is processed correctly using the latest techniques and standards.

If you have concerns that your PVSA sample is being processed at an unaccredited laboratory please raise them with your surgeon. To have your sample processed at an accredited laboratory would require you to travel outside the region as it is not possible to transport the specimen itself.

Please confirm you have read and understood the following statements:

1. I have ejaculated at least 20 times since the vasectomy
2. It is at least 16 weeks since the vasectomy
3. All of the ejaculate has been collected in the container
4. The sample has been produced less than four hours ago

Full name:	
Date of birth:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on **03 44 811 8118**

Other sources of information

NHS 111

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx

NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

www.nice.org.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: **0800 032 0202**

Text: 01670 511098

Email: northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

General Enquiries **03 44 811 8111**

www.northumbria.nhs.uk

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