

Information Leaflet



Liverpool Women's
NHS Foundation Trust

Diagnostic Semen Analysis

What is semen analysis?

Semen analysis is the gold-standard test performed to assess the fertility potential of a male. Several important parameters are measured which include semen volume, sperm concentration, sperm motility and sperm shape. All parameters are compared to reference ranges set by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The total number of spermatozoa per ejaculate, sperm concentration and the extent of progressive sperm motility are related to pregnancy rates. Motility assessment is usually performed using computer-aided sperm analysis (CASA).

How do I get an appointment?

Once you have been referred to us by a clinician you will be able to book in for your appointment online using the NHS e-Referral service. After you have booked in, we will send you out a pack to the address provided to us. This pack will contain instructions, a production form and sample pot. These instructions must be read in advance of your appointment.

If you have any questions, please contact the laboratory on 0151 702 4214.

We are unable to accept any samples without an appointment.

How can I produce the sample?

Samples should be collected by masturbation. Do not produce your sample using lubricants, condoms or through the withdrawal method. If you are unable to ejaculate by masturbation, special condoms for use at home may be provided in exceptional circumstances. However, the entire ejaculate will not be available for examination, and the specimen is likely to be contaminated by contact with the skin of the penis and to some extent also vaginal fluid and cells on the outside of the condom.

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How do I collect the sample?

- In order to obtain an optimum sample you are required to abstain from any sexual activity (masturbation or intercourse) before your appointment. Please ejaculate 4 days before your appointment and then again 2 days before your appointment. Do not ejaculate again until you are producing your sample for analysis.
- Produce your sample by masturbation into the non-toxic sterile pot provided in your pack. Your pot must be labelled with your name, DOB and hospital identification number.
- Please do not attempt to produce your sample into any other type of specimen pot.
- Please ensure you attempt to collect all of the semen produced.
- Once the sample has been collected please ensure the lid is screwed on tightly and place the pot inside the sealable bag provided.
- Ensure you bring the fully completed request form with you to the hospital. We cannot accept your sample until this has been completed correctly.
- The pot must not be exposed to extremes of temperature either before or after sample production. If you are concerned about this, please speak to a member of staff.

Where can I produce the sample?

You may produce your sample at home if you can deliver it to the laboratory at your allotted appointment time **preferably within 30 minutes after collection and at least no longer than 50 minutes after collection**. Whilst travelling from home it is important you keep the sample close to the body under clothes during transportation (for example, in a pocket) as sperm are sensitive to extremes of temperature. If preferable, your partner may deliver your sample and completed production form.

If you cannot deliver your sample to the laboratory within 50 minutes of ejaculation or would rather produce your sample on site, we have private, sound-proof production rooms available for use.


Where do I need to go?

Your chosen appointment location will be listed in your semen analysis pack.

Liverpool – The Lewis-Jones Andrology Department at the Liverpool Women's Hospital (L8 7SS) is situated on the second floor. Please follow signs for the Hewitt Fertility Centre and our waiting room is situated next door.

Knutsford – The Andrology laboratory is situated on the ground floor of The Hewitt Fertility Centre, Knutsford (WA16 8ZR). Upon arrival please report to reception and a member of staff will be able to assist you.

Ormskirk – The Seminology laboratory is located within the Gynaecology and Maternity department at Ormskirk District General Hospital (L39 2AZ). From the main entrance of the hospital please continue two thirds of the way up through the main corridor and turn right.

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How do I get my results?

Your results will be sent back to your referring clinician approximately 14 days after your semen analysis. Unfortunately, these results cannot be given to you by our laboratory staff.

Repeat tests

If you cannot produce your sample or have an incomplete collection you will be asked to repeat the test after a further 2 days abstinence. If one or more of your sperm parameters are reported below the lower fifth percentile (WHO 2021) your clinician may request you repeat the test. This is to ensure your results are representative of a typical ejaculate.

What if I have a poor result?

Discovering you have a poor result may come as a shock and leave you feeling anxious. We have counsellors and patient support groups available at our Liverpool and Knutsford centres if you would like to discuss your feelings relating to this diagnosis.

(<https://www.thehewittfertilitycentre.org.uk/support-and-advice/>) You should always bear in mind that advances in fertility treatment mean that you may still be able to conceive. You can discuss your options and next steps with your clinician.

Research and waste

The portion of your sample that is left over after diagnostic semen analysis is disposed of by incineration. It will not be stored for treatment purposes. In some cases, it may be used by us for training or research.

Queries

Please feel free to contact the laboratory on 0151 702 4214 if you require any further information about this test.


Quality

The Lewis-Jones Andrology department at the Hewitt Fertility Centre has provided a dedicated Andrology service for over 10 years. We were the first Andrology laboratory to be accredited for quality and competence by the UK Accreditation Scheme (UKAS). Our laboratory is also enrolled in the UK National External Quality Assurance Scheme (UK NEQAS) which helps to ensure clinical laboratory test results are accurate, reliable and comparable wherever they are produced.

Feedback

If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of your care or treatment please speak to a member of staff. After your appointment you may receive a text message asking you to complete a survey about our service. We appreciate and encourage feedback.

The Lewis-Jones Andrology Department,
Hewitt Fertility Centre,


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This leaflet can be made available in different formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk

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