

How to Give a Urine Sample for Culture

Midstream clean-catch collection

WHY THE TECHNIQUE MATTERS

A urine culture identifies which germ is causing infection and which antibiotic will kill it. If the sample is contaminated by skin or genital bacteria, the report becomes misleading — and you may be given the wrong antibiotic, or an antibiotic you do not need. **Two minutes of care here changes your treatment.**

Step by step

1. **Collect the first urine of the morning** if possible, or after holding urine for at least 3–4 hours.
2. **Wash your hands** with soap and water.
3. Open the sterile container. **Do not touch the inside of the container or the inside of the lid.** Keep the lid facing upwards.
4. **Clean the private area with plain water** and pat dry with a clean cloth.
Women: separate the labia with one hand and clean from front to back. Keep them held apart while you pass urine.
Men: retract the foreskin and clean the tip.
5. **Pass the first part of the urine into the toilet** — this washes out the passage.
6. **Without stopping the flow**, bring the container into the stream and collect the **middle portion**, about half the container.
7. Move the container away and finish passing urine into the toilet.
8. Close the lid tightly, wash the outside if it is wet, and **wash your hands**.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Label the container with your **name and the date and time**.

Deliver it to the laboratory within one hour. If that is not possible, keep it in the **refrigerator** (not the freezer) and deliver within 24 hours. Urine left at room temperature grows bacteria and gives a false result.

Tell us if you have already started an antibiotic — it changes how the result must be read.
Women: if you are having a period, mention it — the test may need to wait.

Search: urine culture, midstream urine, clean catch, urine sample collection

