



Collecting a urine sample at home

You may be asked to collect your own urine samples at home and bring them to the clinic for checking. You may be given a special container or be asked to find one yourself. Whatever container you use, be sure to keep it clean and well-rinsed.

There are three types of sample you may be asked to collect.

Here's how to do them:

First morning specimen

On the day of your appointment, collect some of your first urine passed after waking up.

24-hour specimen

Collect all the urine you pass over a 24-hour period:

Step 1 After waking, empty your bladder into the toilet without collecting a sample. Your midwife or doctor may ask you to do this at a set time of the morning.

Step 2 Collect all the urine you pass during the rest of the day and night. Empty your sample container each time into the larger one given by the clinic.

Step 3 Exactly 24 hours after Step 1, collect your last sample and add it to the container.

Mid-stream specimen (MSU)

Clean your genital area with water.

Then use the '3S' plan as follows:

Start – pass a small amount of urine into the toilet

Stop – while you still have plenty more to do

Sample – start again and fill the container

Then pass any remaining urine into the toilet.

If you forget to bring your sample to the clinic, ask for a container and collect a fresh sample while you are there.



Pregnant?

Look for the message in a bottle to protect your son or daughter.

Please remember to give a urine sample at every antenatal visit.

Your urine can show early signs of pre-eclampsia



www.apec.org.uk

Action on Pre-Eclampsia
84-88 Pinner Road,
Harrow, Middlesex. HA1 4HZ
e-mail: info@apec.org.uk
Registered charity no. 1013557

Why urine is checked in pregnancy

Your urine gives vital clues to the health of you and your baby.

It is checked regularly for:

Protein – a sign of pre-eclampsia

Glucose (sugar) – a possible sign of diabetes which can appear for the first time in pregnancy

Bacteria – a sign of infection

This leaflet is mainly about urine checks for pre-eclampsia (which used to be called toxæmia). The signs and symptoms of pre-eclampsia occur in the second half of pregnancy. High blood pressure is the other important sign.

Women with pre-eclampsia usually feel perfectly well. That's why regular checks on urine and blood pressure are so important.

How the test works

Your midwife or doctor dips a paper strip (dipstick) into a sample of urine from that day. The test shows whether protein is there and gives an indication of how much.

A tiny amount of protein is written in your notes as a "trace". This is nothing to worry about. More than a trace of protein is noted as one or more + signs, up to four at the most.

What if protein is found?

If you have one + or more of protein and high blood pressure (usually more than 90mmHg diastolic) you may have pre-eclampsia and will need extra care from now on. You may be asked to collect urine over a 24 hour period, to measure exactly how much protein you have.

Protein in your urine is not very likely to be a sign of infection, particularly if you have no other symptoms.

Look out yourself for:

Bad headaches that don't go away;

Blurred vision, flashing lights or spots in front of your eyes;

Bad pain just below the ribs, especially on the right side;

These may be symptoms of pre-eclampsia: tell your midwife or GP straight away and they will check to see if you have high blood pressure or protein in your urine.

If you have pre-eclampsia

You will probably be asked to go into hospital or a day ward so that doctors and midwives can keep a close watch on you and your baby. That is because pre-eclampsia does not get better until after the baby is born. And the baby may need to be delivered early if it gets worse.

