

## It is very important that:

- **The sample has been correctly labelled with YOUR details**

Please do not contact the laboratory for your results. These will be reported directly to your GP or Consultant who will then be able to discuss these with you.

Please be aware that occasionally test may need to be repeated.

## Further information

For further information please look on the RUH website [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

Royal United Hospitals Bath  
NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG  
01225 428331 [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.

Email:  
[ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net)  
or telephone 01225 825656.

# Phlebotomy

## A guide to having a blood test



## Why do I need a blood test?

There may be many reasons why your GP or Consultant may request that you have a blood sample taken. This might be to help with a diagnosis, to monitor treatment, to exclude certain conditions or prior to a blood transfusion.

The procedure is called phlebotomy or venepuncture.

The procedure is very quick. Some patients do feel some discomfort and occasionally bruising can occur.

### The Procedure

Before the procedure can take place you will be asked to confirm your name and date of birth.

A fully trained or supervised member of staff (phlebotomist, doctor or nurse) will place an elasticated tourniquet around your arm, just above the elbow.

A small area of your arm will be cleaned with a skin antiseptic; once a suitable vein has been located a small needle will be inserted into a vein on the inner arm. (if a suitable vein is not found, the back of the hand and in very unusual circumstances feet may be used)

Blood is drawn into the sample tube(s) and then needle and tourniquet are removed. It is possible that more than one tube will need to be collected for all tests to be completed.

The phlebotomist will then usually place a small amount of gauze over the site and will ask you to apply pressure until any bleeding has stopped. The area is then usually covered with tape.

Some patients take longer to stop bleeding than others (e.g. if on oral anticoagulants like warfarin). You should stop bleeding prior to leaving the area where your blood has been taken.

### Will it hurt afterwards?

The procedure should not be very painful, and most patients will just feel a small sting as the needle is inserted.

Some bruising is normal and harmless; it will disperse with time and should not require treatment.

### What happens now?

#### Sample Labelling

The labelling of the sample(s) MUST always be done in your presence and confirmed with you they are correct. Some samples will be labelled with a sticky label which contains a barcode and all your details. The person taking the

blood should sign and note the time the sample was taken, on the sample itself.

Samples for blood transfusion (pink lids) must be handwritten by the person taking your blood.

The following patient details must be recorded on the tubes

- Full name
- Date of Birth
- Hospital or NHS number
- Date sample taken
- Time sample was taken
- Signature of person taking the blood

### Your Rights

You have every right, as a patient to check with the person taking your blood that it has been labelled correctly with your details.

### What happens to my sample?

Your sample is sent to the pathology laboratory to be processed.

Pathology Laboratories process thousands of samples daily so getting your details correct are very important.