

Urine Collection—Huntsville Hospital Health System Laboratory

24-Hour Urine Collections: Huntsville Hospital Health System Laboratory provides 24-hour urine collection containers. The laboratory adds required preservative with the container.

Written instructions should clearly explain the following procedure for correct specimen collection and preparation.

- Warn patient of the presence of potentially hazardous preservatives in collection container.
- Instruct patient to discard **first-morning** specimen and to record time of voiding.
- Patient should collect all subsequent voided urine for remainder of day and night.
- Collect **first-morning** specimen on day 2 at same time as noted on day 1.
- If possible, entire specimen should be refrigerated at 4° C during collection, or kept in a cool place, since urine is an excellent culture medium for organisms and its constituents decompose quickly.

Inform patient of the following recommended collection requirements:

- A normal intake of fluids during collection period is desirable unless otherwise indicated by physician or test specimen requirements.
- If possible, all medications should be discontinued for at least 12 hours (preferably 48 to 72 hours) preceding urine collection period as a precaution against interfering substances in the chemical assays of various hormones.
- In certain complex chemical analyses, the metabolic products of certain foods may cause misleading results. In these instances, laboratory will advise of special diet restrictions to be transmitted to patient.
- Finally, in preparing and submitting specimen, always adhere to the following critical points:
- When aliquots are required with preservatives, use only preservative requested. One preservative must not be substituted for another. Do not add preservatives except as specified by laboratory.
- Even in healthy individual, total daily urine volume may be highly variable (ranging from 1,200 mL to 1,500 mL), depending upon water intake, diet, activity, and environmental factors. It is your responsibility, and laboratory's, to provide patient with an adequate size container.
- When laboratory requires a pooled, well-mixed specimen (collected in more than one container) or a measured aliquot for an individual test, provide specimen prepared exactly as stated in specimen requirements. Submit to laboratory as soon as possible.
- Written instructions should be provided with specific laboratory collection container. Supplement these instructions by discussing them with patient and explaining why test and collection procedure are required.

See "Urine Preservatives" in "Special Instructions" for multiple collections.

Random Collections: For routine analysis and microscopic evaluation, have patient void into a clean container. Specimen should be capped, labeled, and refrigerated until courier pickup time. A clean-catch or midstream specimen is preferred. Patient should first void a small amount of urine which is discarded. Some of the urine should then be collected in a clean container before voiding is completed.

If delays are anticipated in sending specimen to laboratory, a portion of specimen should be aliquoted into a grey urine culture transport tube (boric acid) should any culture work also be desired or indicated.