

Post Vasectomy Semen Analysis

This leaflet is for male patients who have had a vasectomy operation and will require post-operative semen analysis in order for the success of the procedure to be confirmed.

Why have I been asked to produce a semen sample?

Your healthcare professional (HCP) would have informed you that you must use contraception during sexual intercourse following your operation. This is because it takes time for the body to remove residual sperm left in the ejaculatory duct following a vasectomy operation.

In order for you to be sure that your operation has been successful, your semen needs to be tested by the laboratory. The information provided by the laboratory to your HCP will enable them to make a decision on whether you can be confident in the success of the operation before you cease the use of other contraceptives.

What will I need to do to prepare for my test?

Your HCP should have given you some advice to follow before the test. Generally you will be asked that your first test should be conducted **no less than 12 weeks** following your operation and after **at least 20 ejaculations**.

There may be instances where you will be required to provide a second sample. If this is the case, it will be booked approximately **2-4 weeks** after the first one. **Please ensure that you take advice from your HCP on what is expected as this may be different for each individual.**

Prior to the test you must ensure that you have abstained from masturbation or sexual intercourse for at least **48 hours before the test but for no longer than 7 days**.

On the day of the appointment please arrive at the location given below at least five minutes before your appointment time. Please bring your questionnaire with you having completed as much of this as possible. A map is provided on page 5 for you.

Location:

Andrology Department, Good Hope Hospital, 1st Floor Sheldon Unit, Sutton Coldfield, B75 7RR

Opening Hours of the Laboratory:

Monday to Friday:	08:00 – 16:00
Saturdays:	Ad-hoc (clinics do not routinely run on a Saturday-times vary)
Sunday:	Closed
Laboratory Tel:	0121 424 9717
Email (not secure):	Andrology@uhb.nhs.uk

Information for Patients

When you arrive on the **1st** floor please go directly to the Andrology Department which is situated **near Ophthalmology (turn right after the reception desk) and press the bell located outside the laboratory door on the right-hand side**. Wait until a member of the team greets you and takes you to a designated room for you to produce your sample. They will explain the steps you need to follow and give you a sample pot before they leave you alone.

Where will I produce my sample?

To assure your privacy during your visit, the Andrology department has a dedicated and private room for you to produce your sample. The room is set back from the main corridor and housed within a secure and separate area away from non-andrology staff members and the public.

How do I produce my sample?

Once you have been left alone to produce your sample, please ensure that you follow these instructions carefully:

1. Check that the label on the pot contains your correct information. If there is anything incorrect please change appropriately.
2. If not already done so, please wash your hands and penis with soap and water and rinse thoroughly to remove all traces of soap. Finally please ensure that your hands and penis are dried thoroughly.
3. Collect your semen sample by masturbation directly into the sample container given to you. It is important that you do not use any form of lubrication or any other product whilst doing this. Please only collect **one ejaculate**.
4. Replace the lid onto the container, ensuring that it is appropriately fitted to prevent leakage.
5. Place the sample into the incubator (a small metal/glass unit located in the room) closing the door securely once your sample is inside.
6. Wash and dry your hands.
7. Take a few moments to answer some of the final questions in the questionnaire and sign/date the declaration at the bottom.
8. Press the bell located in the room by the door, and wait inside the room with your questionnaire. A member of the team will check your questionnaire before showing you out of the department.

Please note there are no electronic audio-visual facilities provided by the Trust.

What if I cannot produce my sample on site at the hospital?

We understand that this may happen and staff within the Andrology department will be able to talk to you about this. Please do not worry! There may be other options that can be considered and discussed that would be more suitable. This may include the option of off-site production - although in these circumstances we would need to discuss this with you in detail prior to your appointment (telephone the laboratory on **0121 424 9717**).

Information for Patients

What may affect my results?

There are numerous factors that may contribute to the outcome of the test. The list below describes why some of these are important:

- Abstinence period – if you have not abstained for the requested time (2-7 days) then this may affect the sperm numbers that may be detected in your sample.
- Completeness of sample – we must know whether you have collected the entire sample. **Incomplete samples will be rejected as sperm that may be present could be lost in the missing part.**
- Use of products/water etc. to produce a sample – chemicals and water may be toxic to sperm causing a decrease in motility and vitality (whether sperm are alive or dead). This may be important if we do find sperm during the analysis so we advise against the use of any substance to produce your sample.
- Delayed delivery of a sample produced off-site – if you have taken the option of producing off site then failure to bring this to the laboratory within the requested time period will cause uncertainty with motility assessments. Samples must be brought in for your appointment time where possible and within 45 minutes of production. **All samples over 4 hours old will be rejected. Any samples assessed after 1 hour may require further repeats.**
- Temperature – this will not be an issue if producing on-site but if you are going to be bringing your sample in from home we do ask that you keep the sample warm (keep sample close to your body). Failure to do this will mean that we are unable to accurately determine the motility of sperm detected.
- Condoms (including non-toxic condoms) – **we will reject any samples that are produced in any type of condom.**
- Sample Pots - only laboratory provided containers should be used. **Any non-laboratory provided pots will mean we may reject your sample.**
- Numbers of ejaculations – if you do not ejaculate at least 20 times between the operation and the test date it may mean sperm present have not been cleared. This could result in a repeat analysis.
- If we cannot confirm your identity based on the details given to us and those on your sample container, we will reject the sample. Please ensure that all details are completed on the request form and on the sample container.

Please remember that we need to know about anything mentioned above as we want you to have the most accurate report possible.

What is meant by 'clearance'?

This is a word used to state that you do not have sperm in your semen sample and do not require any further tests. In order for clearance to be given, all of the criteria mentioned in this leaflet must be adhered to and all examination procedures in the laboratory must follow published guidelines for post vasectomy semen analysis.

Information for Patients

What is meant by 'special clearance'?

There are occasions where low numbers of non-motile sperm are found in your samples. Rather than repeat the vasectomy or continue with unnecessary semen analysis, your HCP may want to see if these sperm are sufficiently low in number to allow you to cease contraception. These tests will mean that you **must produce on site** so that we can be sure that there are no motile sperm present in your sample.

When will I receive my results?

This will depend on who referred you for this test. If it was your HCP then they will get the results within 7-10 days. If the HCP requests more than one sample, you may need to wait for the overall outcome of all tests undertaken. If you were asked to do this by a Hospital Consultant then you will usually get your results at your next appointment.

Please note that the laboratory will **not give results directly to patients** unless there is a clinical reason. If your HCP informs you that they have not received the results **they** must contact the laboratory. Please discuss with laboratory staff if you are unsure of the protocol for results.

Why have I received another appointment?

Please do not worry if you receive a follow-up appointment in the post. This will be for confirmation purposes and to aid the HCP's in undertaking the appropriate management in line with guidelines for post vasectomy semen analysis. Your HCP can contact the laboratory for more information. Please follow all advice given to you by your HCP in these circumstances.

If I cannot attend my appointment or I am delayed, what shall I do?

If you cannot make your appointment please contact our Appointment Centre on **0121 424 1234**.

Please note car parking facilities are difficult and you will need to give sufficient time to find a space if you are driving here.

Please contact the laboratory on 0121 424 9717 if you feel that you may be late.

Late arrivals may not be seen by the Andrology Team. Please be aware that we reserve the right to do this as the tests are time-dependant and we must ensure that the integrity of other samples will not compromised. We ask that you respect the decision of the Biomedical Scientist/Lead if this is the case and we will do our best to re-book you as soon as possible.

Note: Patients who fail to attend their appointment and do not notify the Trust will need a re-referral and be placed at the end of the waiting list.

What if I want to comment or complain about my experience?

Please either contact the laboratory or telephone PALS on 0121 424 0808 or visit the following website: pals@uhb.nhs.uk.

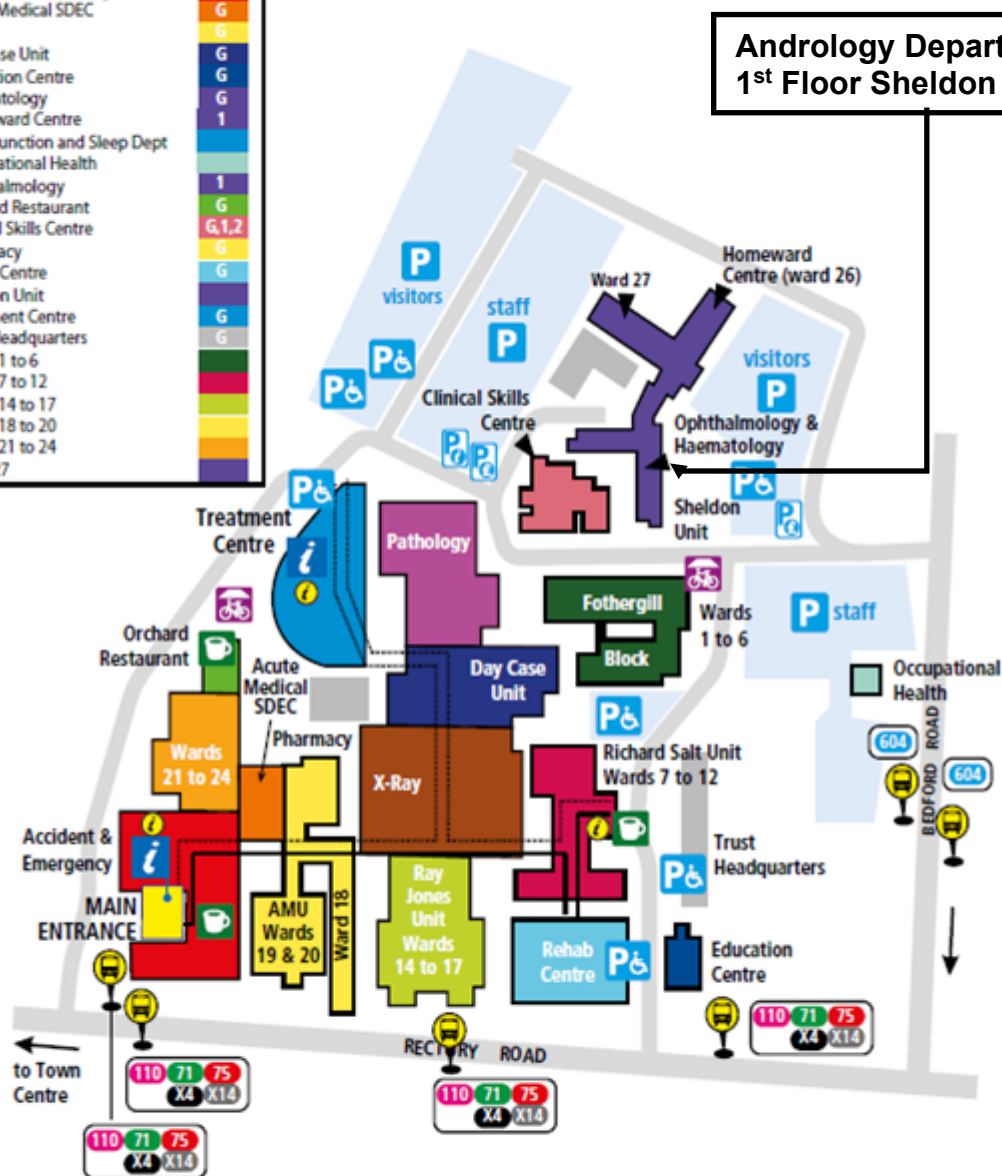
Information for Patients

Map of Good Hope Hospital

Good Hope Hospital

NHS
University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust

Department	Level
Accident & Emergency	G
Acute Medical SDEC	G
AMU	G
Day Case Unit	G
Education Centre	G
Haematology	G
Homeward Centre	1
Lung Function and Sleep Dept	1
Occupational Health	1
Ophthalmology	G
Orchard Restaurant	G, 1, 2
Clinical Skills Centre	G
Pharmacy	G
Rehab Centre	G
Sheldon Unit	G
Treatment Centre	G
Trust Headquarters	G
Wards 1 to 6	G
Wards 7 to 12	G
Wards 14 to 17	G
Wards 18 to 20	G
Wards 21 to 24	G
Ward 27	G



References

Hancock et al (2016). 2016 Laboratory guidelines for postvasectomy semen analysis: Association of Biomedical Andrologists, the British Andrology Society and the British Association of Urological Surgeons. *Journal of Clinical Pathology*, doi:10.1136/jclinpath-2016-203731.