

# How to collect a urine sample for a UTI test



# How to collect a urine sample for a UTI test



## Why it matters

A properly collected urine sample gives the best chance of an accurate test result. A poor sample may lead to incorrect results or the need for repeat testing. Follow these steps to get the best sample possible.

Start with having a sterile urine collection pot, which you can get from your GP surgery or pharmacy. Using an old container from home can contaminate the sample and affect the results. If you experience frequent UTIs, ask for a couple to keep at home.

### 1. Wash your hands

- Use soap and water before starting.
- If possible, wear disposable gloves.



### 2. Prepare the sample container

- Remove the lid without touching the inside.
- Place the lid face down on a clean tissue.
- If your sample pot has a narrow opening, tilt it slightly or hold it close to your body to catch the urine more easily.



### 3. Clean the area (use warm water and a clean cloth or tissue)

- **Women:** Wipe from front to back.
- **Men:** Wipe the tip of the penis.
- Avoid touching your urethra with your hands.



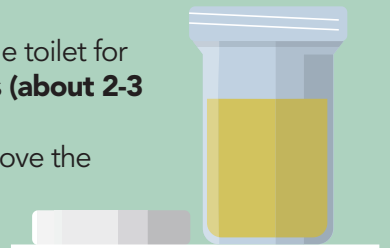
### 4. Position yourself comfortably

- Sit normally or straddle the toilet if easier.
- **For women:** Gently hold back the skin around your vagina with your fingers before peeing - this helps make sure your sample is as clean as possible.



### 5. Collect a midstream sample

- Start urinating into the toilet for a **couple of seconds (about 2-3 seconds)**
- Without stopping, move the container into the stream.
- Fill to about **one-third to two-thirds full.**



### 6. Secure and clean the sample

- Without touching inside, screw the lid back on.
- If there are any spills on the outside of the container, wipe it with a clean tissue or paper towel.



### 7. Label and deliver

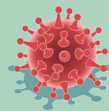
- Write your name on the container **before** handing it in.
- If taking it to the doctor or lab, do so within an hour if possible.
- If posting, follow all kit instructions carefully.
- If you are unable to deliver the sample the same day - keep it in the fridge (not freezer) and drop it off at surgery/clinic within 24 hours.



## What to avoid before collecting your urine sample

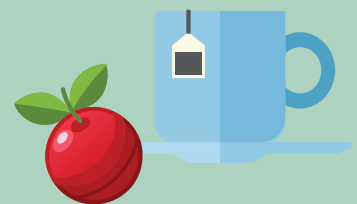
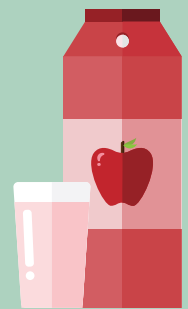
Try to avoid...

- Collecting your sample after drinking lots of water - this can dilute bacteria.
- Taking the sample while on your period - blood can affect results (only if possible).
- Using an old or unsterile container - this may give a false reading.
- Touching the inside of the lid or container - this can introduce bacteria.
- Using soaps, creams, or wipes just before collecting - these may affect the test.



## Try to avoid these medications before collecting your sample if it is safe/practical to do so:

- **Diuretics** (such as caffeine, alcohol, or water tablets) - can dilute urine and reduce the chance of detecting bacteria.
- **Antibiotics** - may affect the test result by partially treating the infection before it's confirmed.
- **Vitamin C (high doses)** - can interfere with some urine tests.
- **Probiotics** - may alter bacterial levels in the urine, affecting test accuracy.
- **Other antimicrobials (e.g. herbal remedies, cranberry supplements, D-mannose)** - might influence results by reducing bacteria before testing.



## Extra tips for accurate results

- **Best time to collect:** When your symptoms are at their worst.
- **Morning samples:** A first-morning sample can be helpful if you have ongoing, mild UTI symptoms, as urine is more concentrated after sleeping.
- **Frequent UTIs?** You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for extra sterile sample containers to keep at home for quick collection when symptoms start.



## What is a UTI?

A Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) is a common infection that can affect anyone, regardless of age, and involves the urinary system but most commonly the bladder. UTIs are the second most common kind of infection after chest infections.

UTIs can be uncomfortable and debilitating. They can be particularly serious in the elderly and those with weakened immune systems. Early detection and proper management are essential to prevent complications.

## What are the symptoms?

UTIs can cause a variety of symptoms, which may include:

- Burning sensation during urination
- Cloudy or strong-smelling urine
- Frequent urge to urinate with little or nothing being passed
- Fever or high temperature
- Feeling generally unwell
- Confusion in the elderly

These symptoms can vary in severity, and early detection is important to prevent complications, especially in vulnerable individuals. UTIs can progress to sepsis, a life-threatening condition. Watch for high fever, rapid breathing, and confusion.

**\*Urgent help - If symptoms worsen quickly or you experience any severe symptoms mentioned above, immediate action is necessary: Call NHS 111 for guidance or to find out if you have severe symptoms and need urgent medical care.\***

**For more detailed information on managing and treating UTIs, please refer to our specific treatment-focused information on our website:**

**<https://www.theurologyfoundation.org/urology-health/bladder-conditions/urinary-tract-infections-uti/>**

**For information on the references we have used and information on further reading please contact [nurse@theurologyfoundation.org](mailto:nurse@theurologyfoundation.org)**

**Our confidential UTI Information Service is here to help you:**

**☎ 0808 801 1108    👤 Helpline open Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am - 12 noon**

**💻 [nurse@theurologyfoundation.org](mailto:nurse@theurologyfoundation.org)**

