

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

ABOUT

HAVING A BLOOD TEST IN OUTPATIENT

PHLEBOTOMY (BLOOD TEST ROOM)

This information is available in other formats on request. Please ask your nursing staff to arrange this

Information for patients having a blood test in Outpatient Phlebotomy (Blood Test Room)

Opening Times: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri 08.30 – 16.50 hrs
Tues – 07.30 – 16.50

Location: Ground Floor, 2nd left off the Main Corridor

Please note: The department is generally quieter on Wednesday, Thursday & Friday afternoons. Mornings can be quite busy.

We also have a blood taking service at Sainsbury's, Wetherby Rd, Harrogate based in the Pharmacy section of the store

Opening Times: Mon – Friday 07.30 – 11.00

There are many situations in which your doctor may request that you have a blood sample (or samples) taken. These are usually to aid diagnosis, monitor treatment or to exclude certain conditions. In most of these cases these samples will be taken by a procedure known as phlebotomy or venepuncture i.e. taking blood from a vein.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

Please make sure that you have the blood request form given to you by your doctor (unless a special arrangement has been made). **Please check that the details on this form are for you. Check that your full name, date of birth, and any other details are correct. If any of these details are wrong it is very important that you mention it to your doctor.**

If you have been requested to fast, please do not have anything to eat or drink, except water and medication, for 8 – 12 hrs prior to attending. If you are unsure whether to fast please check with the doctor who gave you the blood request form.

On arrival, please take a number from the ticket machine by the door and enter the room when your number is displayed. Please make sure you have used the hand gel to comply with Infection Control requirements.

HOW IS A BLOOD SAMPLE TAKEN?

The phlebotomist (the person who takes the blood sample) confirms your identity and then puts a tourniquet (a tight band) around your arm just above the elbow. The area in the crook of your arm is cleaned and the tip of a new sterile needle is inserted gently into the vein on the inner arm. Blood is withdrawn into the sample bottle(s) and the needle removed. Several bottles may be necessary however the amount taken into each is very small and they can all be taken at the same time.

The phlebotomist removes the needle and pressure will be applied to a piece of cotton wool over the site to stop bleeding. Once this has stopped a piece of micropore dressing will be applied. Please keep this on for a minimum of half an hour. Avoid excessive movement of the arm, such as lifting or carrying heavy bags for an hour or so after the test.

WILL IT HURT?

The initial insertion of the needle involves a pin prick sensation which can be uncomfortable, but after that the rest of the procedure should be relatively painless.

HOW LONG WILL MY RESULTS TAKE?

The results of most tests will be available to the requesting doctor in approx 3 working days. However, there are some tests that do take longer as the sample may need to be sent to a specialist laboratory.

CAN THERE BE ANY COMPLICATIONS?

If you are nervous or have a tendency to faint please let the phlebotomist know. We can reassure you and if necessary lay you flat whilst the procedure is done.

A small bruise or lump may develop as some patients are more likely to bruise than others. Whilst bruising may look alarming it is usually self-limiting and does not require treatment.

Some conditions may increase the risk of bruising, these are: -

- Medications such as warfarin, aspirin or steroids.
- Conditions such as bleeding disorders
- Those with lower than normal numbers of platelets in their blood (this is sometimes called thrombocytopenia)

- Where it is difficult to locate a vein
- Some elderly or frail patients

Please tell the phlebotomist if any of the above apply or if you have previously experienced problems with bruising.

TRAINING

Occasionally we train other health professionals in phlebotomy. We will tell you if the person is in training and ask your permission for a trainee to take your blood. If you do not want a trainee to take your blood test please inform the supervising phlebotomist. Please do not feel uncomfortable doing this.

CONFIDENTIALITY & DIGNITY

The blood test room contains 3 phlebotomy chairs so it is likely that other patients will be in the room at the same time as you. Each chair has a curtain which can be used to provide privacy if you need to remove any layers of clothing or if you begin to feel faint.

You will be asked to state your name, date of birth (and possibly your address in certain situations). If you would like to speak to the phlebotomist about any sensitive or confidential matters please mention this to the phlebotomist and we will wait until the other patients have left the room before we listen to your concerns.

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