



**Saint Mary's Managed Clinical Service**  
**Division of Gynaecology**

## **PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET**

# **DIAGNOSTIC SEMEN ANALYSIS**

This leaflet has been written to provide you with important information on your upcoming semen analysis appointment. It will explain the following:

- What a diagnostic semen analysis is.
- What you need to do to prepare for the test.
- Important information you may find useful.

## **WHAT IS DIAGNOSTIC SEMEN ANALYSIS?**

Diagnostic semen analysis (DSA) is a laboratory test where ejaculate (semen) is examined in the laboratory as part of your investigations. The test is most often performed as part of fertility investigations, but it can also be undertaken for other reasons, such as to monitor the impact of treatment.

When the ejaculate is examined, the following will be looked at:

- Volume – the amount of ejaculate produced (in mL).
- Viscosity – how thick or thin the fluid is.
- pH – how acidic or alkaline the sample is.
- Sperm Motility – the way sperm moves (sperm are the cells that are needed for fertilisation).
- Sperm Concentration – the number of sperm in the ejaculate (reported as millions per millilitre).
- Sperm Morphology – the size and shape of the sperm (reported as percentage normal forms).

There are other factors that may be examined if required, but these may not always be needed on every sample:

- Non-sperm cells – these are cells which are not sperm and can be white blood cells or immature sperm cells.
- Vitality – this examines whether sperm are dead or alive (reported as percentage live sperm).

## **ARRANGING YOUR APPOINTMENT**

If you have been asked to take this test by your General Practitioner (GP) we will send out an appointment in the post and on our MyMFT system (if you have signed up to this application). You will be asked to provide a fresh sample in one of the private production rooms we have available.

If you want to produce your sample off-site, these samples must be transported to our department at body temperature as excessive cold or heat can damage the sperm and affect the result. You will also need to bring the sample here **within 50 minutes** of it being produced. The day and time will need to be arranged with the Andrology team.

If you need to rearrange your appointment, or request an off-site sample appointment, please Email the Andrology team on [mft.andrology.lab@nhs.net](mailto:mft.andrology.lab@nhs.net). For any queries or directions please call on **0161 276 6473**. If you do not rearrange an appointment, you will not be seen by our team. The address can be found at the end of this leaflet.

To make changes to your appointment, where possible, contact the Andrology Laboratory on **0161 276 6473** between 12:00 – 15:00 (**Monday to Friday**). You may also email the laboratory on [mft.andrology.lab@nhs.net](mailto:mft.andrology.lab@nhs.net) and we will get back to you within 2 working days.

**Please note we do not provide pornographic magazines, but you may bring your own material if you wish. Wi-Fi will not support certain websites; therefore, we would advise downloading your own material for use on the day if required as access may not be possible.**

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTING YOUR SEMEN SAMPLE

Please follow these instructions carefully as anything outside of the guidance can impact on your results.

- You should not ejaculate (either through masturbation or intercourse) for between 48 hours and 7 days before the appointment. If this is not followed it can impact sperm numbers.
- You will be provided with a health questionnaire to complete some sections before you produce your sample. This is to support interpretation of your results. Some sections must be completed after your sample is collected.
- Wash your hands with soap and water, drying fully afterwards.
- You should only produce the sample by masturbation into a container that we have provided (other containers can kill sperm).
- **Do not use lubrication or a condom to produce your sample as this can kill sperm.**
  - **If you need lubrication, please ask a member of the team to provide you with some that will not kill sperm.**
- The complete ejaculate should be collected into the container as otherwise it may affect sperm numbers.
- Label the sample container with your first name, last name, date of birth and the date/time the sample was produced.
- Ensure that the lid is screwed on to the container properly.
- Place the container into the bag provided.
- Ensure the questionnaire is completed and sample is handed to a member of the Andrology team.

If you feel you may have any difficulties producing your sample (maybe due to anxiety, medications, or other health issues), please contact the Andrology team and discuss this prior to your attendance so that we can advise you. If you would prefer to speak to someone face-to-face, please let the team know when you attend your appointment.

## WHAT CAN IMPACT YOUR RESULTS?

There are many things that can influence semen analysis results, some are out of your control and others you can influence. The section on how to collect your semen sample outlines some of the things in your control.

- Illnesses – certain illnesses can impact the ability of the testicles to produce sperm or the quality of the sperm. If you have had an illness that has caused a high temperature in the last 3 – 6 months, this includes cold and flu. All illnesses should be written on the request form. For example, diabetes, hypertension etc.
- Medications – certain medications can impact ejaculatory, erectile and testicular function. Please let us know of all the medications you may be on.
- Recreational drugs – this can include cannabis, cocaine, opiates etc. These may impact sperm quality.
- Performance enhancing drugs – the most common include anabolic steroids, testosterone, anti-oestrogens, selective androgen receptor modulators (SARMS). These can impact sperm production and hormone levels in the brain.
- Smoking/Alcohol – although evidence can be limited, excessive alcohol consumption can impact liver function and sperm quality. Smoking may also affect sperm quality and cause DNA damage in these cells.

**Please do not add anything to your sample including lubricants/oil as this will affect the results.**

### Rejection of samples

In the following circumstances, the samples will be rejected and may result in you needing to attend another appointment. Please do not:

- Post the sample to us as we will reject this sample, and you will have to be given a new appointment.
- Drop off samples more than 50 minutes from the time of production
- Drop off any samples without an appointment.
- Drop off samples that are not labelled properly and where your details cannot be verified.

## RESULTS OF TEST

Results will be sent to the healthcare professional that referred you within **7 – 10 working days**. If you are a patient being cared for under the Department of Reproductive Medicine, you will receive your results at your follow-up clinic/consultation appointment.

If you have signed up to MyMFT, you may receive your results electronically. There are limitations to these results and some information may be missing. If you need any help with the results, please contact the Andrology team or the clinician looking after you.

We do not routinely give results to patients, although we can support your healthcare professional with clinical advice if required. If you have any issues, contact us via Email or telephone.

There are other factors that may be examined but if this happens, your referring healthcare professional will tell you what has been looked at.

## HOW TO FIND US

The Andrology Department is in Old Saint Mary's Hospital (not the new building), within the Department of Reproductive Medicine on the first floor.

The address of the department is given below:

**Andrology Laboratories  
Old Saint Mary's Hospital  
Oxford Road  
Manchester  
M13 0JH**

Opening hours for enquiries:

Monday to Friday – 08.00 am to 04.00 pm.

We are not open on Saturdays, Sundays, or on bank holidays.

More information on how to get here and other details such as car parking can be found on the website – <https://mft.nhs.uk/saint-marys/>

Please come to the main entrance and press the intercom (if the door is locked). If the door is open, proceed to the first floor and press the bell outside Andrology reception.

For disabled access, please telephone the department in advance (0161 276 6473). We have a separate entrance just off Oxford Road. Please press the intercom on arrival.

## PRIVACY POLICY

Details of our privacy policy can be found on our website: <https://mft.nhs.uk/saint-marys/services/gynaecology/reproductive-medicine/andrology/>

## COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

If you have any compliments or complaints, please contact our department or Trust patient advice and liaison service (PALS). PALS information can be found here: <https://mft.nhs.uk/saint-marys/pals/>

## TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION SERVICES

It is our policy that family, relatives or friends cannot interpret for patients. Should you require an interpreter ask a member of staff in advance of your appointment.

## CONTACT DETAILS



0161 276 6473



[mft.andrology.lab@nhs.net](mailto:mft.andrology.lab@nhs.net) or [andrology.lab@mft.nhs.uk](mailto:andrology.lab@mft.nhs.uk)



<https://mft.nhs.uk/saint-marys/services/gynaecology/reproductive-medicine/andrology/>