

Protocol for collecting saliva in salivette tubes at home

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Department of Clinical Biochemistry

① For more information, please contact:

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Providing pathology services at:

[York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust](#)

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Contents	Page
Introduction	3
Could there be any risks/complications?	3
How do I prepare for the saliva collection?	4
What do I need to do?	6
What will happen afterwards?.....	7
Tell us what you think of this leaflet.....	8
Teaching, training and research	8
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)	8
Leaflets in alternative languages or formats.....	9

Introduction

We need to collect your saliva to test it for a hormone called cortisol. High levels of night-time cortisol might suggest your body is producing too much cortisol. Collecting saliva to do this test is more convenient than having a blood test as it has to be done at night.

Please read this information carefully before starting your collection. Failure to follow the instructions may lead to an incorrect test result and the need to repeat the test.

You will need to collect saliva at 11pm on three separate evenings. If you will not be able to collect your samples at 11pm, please let the person who has requested this test know, before collecting your samples.

Only provide samples if you are feeling well. Do not collect your samples if you are ill for any reason, for example if you have a cold, flu or infection. Wait until you are feeling well before collecting the samples.

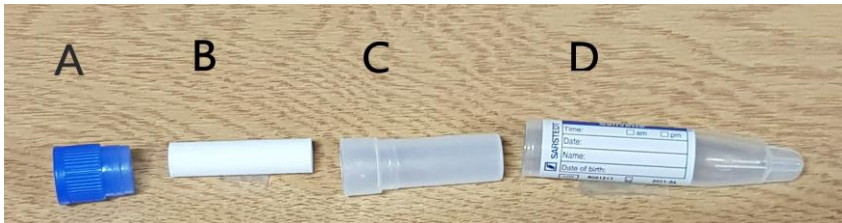
Could there be any risks/complications?

There are no risks or complications associated with this procedure.

How do I prepare for the saliva collection?

You have been given a request form and three collection tubes.

Before starting your saliva collections, check that you have three tubes, each with a stopper (A), swab (B), inner tube (C) and outer tube (D).



If any of these elements are missing, please do not start your collections. Please contact the person who has asked you to perform the test.

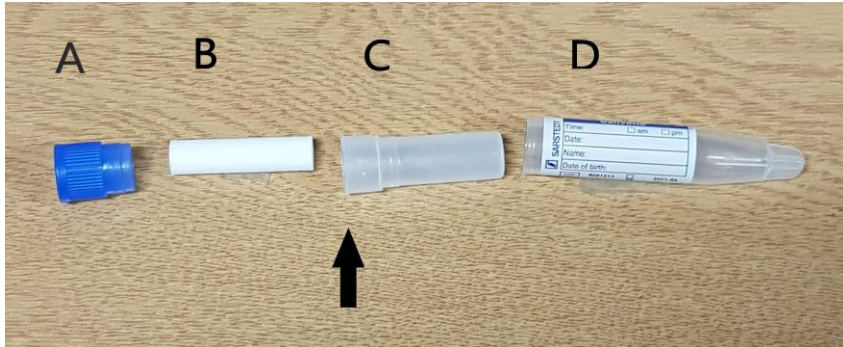
Before taking the samples, and to ensure the samples are not contaminated, please:

- Write your full forename, surname and date of birth on all tubes.
- Do not rinse your mouth, brush your teeth, eat or drink for 30 minutes before sampling.
- Do not smoke for two hours before sampling.

- Do not use prescription skin creams for one day before sampling. You can continue to use non-prescription skin creams, moisturisers, soaps and face washes as normal.
- Do not eat black liquorice, or drink herbal tea that contains liquorice, for 2 weeks before sampling.

What do I need to do?

Wash your hands. Hold the tube at the rim (black arrow in picture below) and remove the stopper (A).



Now remove the swab (B) and place it in your mouth. Chew the swab for 30-45 seconds until you feel that you can no longer stop yourself from swallowing the saliva produced.

Return the saturated swab (B) to the inner tube (C). Put inner tube (C) inside outer tube (D) and close the tube firmly with the stopper (A).

Write the date and time of each sampling on the sample tube and on the request form.

Store the used tubes in the fridge (not freezer) until all three samples are collected.

CHECK! - Please ensure that your full forename, surname and date of birth are written on each tube along with the time and date of the sample. Please also write the collection dates and times on the request form you have been given.

When all three samples have been collected return them with the request form to your GP surgery or hospital laboratory on the next working day.

What will happen afterwards?

Once your sample reaches the laboratory, it will be sent for specialist testing.

The results will be sent to your hospital doctor after about four weeks. Your doctor will contact you to discuss the results with you.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Alison Jones, Department of Clinical Biochemistry, York Hospital; 01904 725786; Alison.jones38@nhs.net

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

To contact PALS:

In York or Scarborough dial 01904 726262 or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

In Hull and the East Riding
dial 01482 875875 or email hyp-tr.pals.mailbox@nhs.net

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

This leaflet was produced by Scarborough, York and Hull Pathology Services (SHYPS)

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