

Blood testing service from 1 December 2016

Why do I need a blood test?

Blood tests can be used for a number of reasons, such as to:

- help your GP/healthcare professional make a diagnosis
- make sure someone does not have an illness
- check how well someone is responding to treatment(s)

What do I need to bring?

Your GP, consultant or healthcare professional will give you a form or order number when they refer you for a blood test which will let us know what type of blood test you need. Please bring the form or order number with you to your blood test.

Appointments

Routine and urgent appointments: For routine and urgent blood tests a drop-in service will run Monday - Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm at the following clinics:

- **St Catherine's Health Centre**, Derby Road, Birkenhead, CH42 0LQ
- **Victoria Central**, Outpatients Department, Mill Lane, Wallasey CH44 5UF
- **Eastham Clinic**, Eastham Rake, CH62 9AN
- **All Day Health Centre**, Arrowe Park Hospital, Upton, CH49 5PE

Patients will be seen in order of arrival and waiting times will vary.

Housebound patients: If you are housebound your GP can arrange for you to have an appointment at home.

Glucose Tolerance Tests: If you have been referred for a Glucose Tolerance Test (GTT) you can call the Centralised Booking Service on tel: **0151 514 2222** and request a timeslot which suits your circumstances.

Can I eat or drink before my blood test?

For certain tests, you cannot eat anything and can only drink water for a period of time before your test. This is called a 'fasting' test - your referring healthcare professional will tell you if you need to do this. If you are taking medications with food and need to fast before your blood test, please ask your GP for advice.

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Phlebotomy Service (Blood testing)

How do you take my blood?

You will be seated to have the test but if you've fainted in the past when you've had a blood test, please tell the phlebotomist, it may be better for you to lie on a couch.

The phlebotomist will place a tight strap (tourniquet) around your arm. This helps them to find the vein and makes it easier for them to take the sample of blood. They then put a needle into the vein to take the blood sample.

Will it hurt?

Our phlebotomists are trained and highly skilled in taking blood. It is usually a quick procedure but you may experience slight discomfort.

Will it bruise?

Although every effort is made to reduce the risk of bruising, there is a possibility you may bruise after a blood test.

Your risk of bruising is greater if you:

- take anticoagulant (blood-thinning) medications such as warfarin or aspirin - *if you need more information about this, please ask your GP*
- have a bleeding disorder
- have difficulties finding your vein, especially in areas that are swollen (oedema)
- are elderly

What happens to my blood samples?

We send your blood samples to the laboratory for testing. Most tests are done on the same day, but some are done in batches, once or twice a week. All samples are dealt with as quickly as possible.

The results are returned to the healthcare professional who referred you for the blood tests.

When will I get my results?

Your GP or healthcare professional will tell you when they expect the results. For most routine tests, results are sent to them within five working days.

Your GP or healthcare professional needs to look at your results together with your medical history to check your health.

Please be aware that we are unable to give you the results. You will need to speak to you referring GP or healthcare professional.

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If you would like to provide feedback about any of our services please contact our Patient Experience Officer on **0151 514 6311** or Freephone **0800 694 5530** or by email: wcnt.patientexperience@nhs.net

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