Patient Instructions for Semen Analysis

Your doctor has ordered a semen analysis. This paper will explain important information about the collection of this specimen and delivery to the Laboratory.

Semen analyses are performed Monday – Friday from 8am – 4:30 pm, excluding holidays. Specimens must be delivered to Salem Regional Lab at 3300 State Street within ½ hour of collection. Please contact Salem Client Services at 503-561-5288 for questions.

1. You should abstain from any sexual activity for 2 to 7 days prior to collection of the semen sample. Ideally, it should be more than 2 days from a previous ejaculation and not more than 7 days.
2. Please label the container with your name (male), date of birth, and the time and date the specimen was collected.
3. A semen sample should be collected only after you have washed your hands and penis with soap and water, being sure to rinse away all of the soap residue. Dry thoroughly before collecting the sample.
4. The sample should be collected by masturbation directly into a sterile, clean and dry container provided by your physician or laboratory. You can pick one of our containers by stopping at our laboratory or any outpatient service centers. Religious issues, collection via interrupted intercourse or use of fertility condoms should be discussed with your provider.
   A. Lubricants should not be used to aid in the collection of the sperm as they may be toxic to sperm.
   B. Condoms should not be used for semen collection because they contain agents that kill sperm. If you need to collect a sample with intercourse, ask your physician for a fertility condom. If you collect a sample in this type of condom, drop the whole condom into one of our sterile containers and bring this into the laboratory.
   C. Interrupted intercourse is not the preferred method of specimen collection as this may result in the loss of the most critical portion of the ejaculate (first portion) and the specimen may be contaminated with cells or bacteria from the vagina. This should be discussed with your physician prior to collection.
   D. If pubic hair or thread of clothing accidentally falls into the container, do not attempt to remove it. The lab will remove it using sterile techniques.
5. Be sure that all of the sample is added directly into the container. Close the container lid tightly to ensure the specimen does not leak. If a portion of the sample was lost during collection, please indicate this on the form the lab personnel will ask you to complete.
6. Please keep the specimen close to body temperature during transportation.
7. The specimen must be received at the laboratory within ½ hour of collection.
8. You will be asked to fill out a confidential form. This information will assist the physician in evaluating the results of your laboratory test. This information is strictly confidential.
9. You may call us at 503-561-5288 if you have any questions. We are here to help and your attention to the above instructions will help to eliminate potential problems.