Semen Analysis for Male Fertility Investigations

Infertility is estimated to affect 1 in 7 heterosexual couples in the UK. Couples who have not been able to conceive within one year of having regular unprotected sexual intercourse will be offered a series of investigations through the NHS to assess their fertility status, including semen analysis.

What is semen analysis?

Semen analysis is the microscopic examination of semen to determine how many sperm are present and whether they function correctly. This includes an assessment of their motility (how fast they swim) and their morphology (what they look like). The results of semen analysis can be used in conjunction with other investigations to assess the reason why a couple may have had problems in conceiving naturally.

Your doctor has requested this test to investigate your fertility. This test may also be requested for men who have had a private vasectomy reversal operation.

What do I have to do?

1) Ensure that your doctor has provided you with a completed request form for diagnostic semen analysis, a semen collection container (with a yellow lid) and a specimen bag.

2) Make an appointment for your semen sample to be tested. Semen samples that arrive without an appointment will NOT be accepted. Appointments for semen analysis are available from Monday – Friday between 08.30am – 10.30am (excluding Bank Holidays). Please be aware that there may be a waiting time for the next available appointment. You can book an appointment by either:

   - **Using the Choose and Book Service**
     Your doctor can make an appointment for you during your consultation via the Choose and Book service. You will be given a booking reference number and password that you will need if you wish to amend or cancel your appointment via the Choose and Book appointments telephone number (0845 60 88888).

   - **Contacting the Appointments Call Centre (01733 673555)**
     You can contact the Peterborough City Hospital Appointments Call Centre to book an appointment. If you wish to amend or cancel your appointment for any reason, please contact the call centre as soon as possible.

3) Carefully read the instructions provided in this information sheet prior to collecting your sample in the collection container provided by your doctor. You must deliver your sample to the **PCH Outpatients Department** within **45 minutes of production**.
Please note:
Your sample must be produced at home and delivered to the hospital at the time of your appointment. There is NO facility available to produce your semen sample at Peterborough City Hospital.

What happens if I miss my appointment?
Your sample must be tested as soon as possible after production to ensure that the results that are produced are valid. You must deliver your sample as close to your appointment time as possible to allow sufficient time for it to be tested.

If you bring your sample to the hospital at the wrong time or on the wrong day, it may not be possible to test it. If your sample cannot be tested, you will be advised to book another appointment for semen analysis and will need to collect an additional collection container and request form from your doctor.

What happens if I don’t bring my request form?
Your sample cannot be tested without a completed request form. Please ensure that you complete all the required fields on both the request form and the collection container regarding your personal details and sample details. Your sample will not be tested if you fail to provide sufficient information.

What must I do before producing my sample?
In order to obtain the optimum sample for analysis, the recommended abstinence period is 2-7 days prior to your appointment. Please abstain from any sexual activity (either through masturbation or intercourse) for 2 days before your appointment. This abstinence period should not exceed 7 days.

How do I collect my sample?

- Wash your hands and genitals prior to sample collection.

- Produce your sample by masturbation (hand stimulation) directly into the collection container. It is important that all the semen that is produced is collected into the container.

- Complete the required fields on the request form and collection container, including your full name, date of birth, sample collection date and time, date of last sexual activity and indicate if the sample is complete.

- Ensure that the lid of the collection container is firmly sealed and place the container in the specimen bag provided.

- Keep the sample close to your body (e.g. in your pocket) to prevent exposure to extremes of temperature.

Do NOT use alternative methods to produce your sample. Samples obtained by withdrawal during sexual intercourse (coitus interruptus), or samples collected using a condom or any form of lubricant are unsuitable for analysis.
Samples must be produced as close as possible to the time of your appointment, and must be delivered within 45 minutes of your appointment.

Where do I deliver my sample to?
You must bring your sample and completed request form to the reception desk at the PCH Outpatients Department as soon as possible after producing your sample. The department is only accessible via the main hospital entrance.

Upon your arrival, you will be asked to wait in the department for a trained member of staff to meet you to collect your sample. Your sample will be taken to the laboratory for testing immediately.

How is my sample tested?
Your sample will be examined for a number of different factors that can affect male fertility. This includes the volume of the ejaculate, the number of sperm that are present, the speed that the sperm are swimming and the size and shape of the sperm. Specialised tests can be performed if indicated.

How do I get my results?
The results from the analysis of your sample will be sent back to the doctor that requested the test for you. Your results should normally be available within 14 days of your test. Your doctor may request a repeat test to confirm the result if this is indicated.

Please note:
Due to the confidential nature of your results, the laboratory cannot give results directly to patients over the telephone. Please contact your doctor for your results.

Quality Assurance
The laboratory subscribes to the UK National External Quality Assurance Scheme (UK NEQAS) for Reproductive Science and the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) external quality assurance programme.

Enquiries
Semen analysis is performed by the Department of Clinical Chemistry and Immunology. Please do not hesitate to contact the laboratory on 01733 678454 if you have any enquiries or require additional information about this test.

Contact Details
Department of Clinical Chemistry and Immunology
Peterborough City Hospital, Edith Cavell Campus, Bretton Gate, Peterborough, PE3 9GZ
Semen Analysis for Male Fertility Investigations

Please deliver your sample to the Outpatients Department at Peterborough City Hospital

Section 1 (Regarding the male patient)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Required:</th>
<th>Semen Analysis for Fertility</th>
<th>Private Vasectomy Reversal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Forename</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male Surname</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male Date of Birth (DOB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHS Number (if known)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospital Number (if known)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requesting Doctor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surgery Name and Address</td>
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</tbody>
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Section 2 (Regarding the female patient)

| Female Forename                              |                               |
| Female Surname                               |                               |
| Female Date of Birth (DOB)                   |                               |

Section 3 (To be completed by the patient upon sample production at home)

| Date of Sample Production                     |                               |
| Time of Sample Production                     |                               |
| Date of Last Sexual Activity                  |                               |
| Was the Sample Complete?                      | Yes / No (please circle)      |
| Have you had semen tested at PCH before?      | Yes / No (please circle)      |

Please book an appointment before producing your sample.

Samples received without an appointment will NOT be tested.