

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COLLECTION OF SEMEN SPECIMENS  
FOR MALE FERTILITY STUDIES**

In order to properly assess fertility, it is important that a semen specimen be obtained and transported in a manner that will produce accurate results. Compliance with the following instructions will help ensure a high quality specimen that will provide accurate information for your healthcare provider.

1. **Prior to collection:** Refrain from sexual activity, including masturbation, for 48 to 72 hours prior to collecting specimen. Periods of less than 48 hours may result in decreased sperm concentrations. Intervals that exceed 7 days result in increased sperm concentrations with a decrease in motile and viable forms. Do not use lubricants as they can kill sperm cells. Avoid oral and vaginal secretions which will contaminate the specimen.
2. **Before collecting the specimen:** call the St Joseph Hospital Laboratory to schedule the collection drop off. **We accept semen specimens between 7 am and 11 am, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursday ONLY. Specimens cannot be accepted on Fridays, weekends or holidays.** Call 882-3000, ext 67215 between 7am and 5pm to schedule a collection. Sterile containers and labels may be obtained at the St Joseph Hospital Laboratory or from your medical provider's office.
3. **Collection Instructions:** Semen samples are best obtained by masturbation directly into a sterile container. Other forms of collection, such as interrupted intercourse, are discouraged because it increases the possibility of an incomplete or contaminated collection. **DO NOT submit specimens in a condom.** Care must be taken to include the entire specimen. Loss of the first portion of the ejaculate may result in inaccurate test results.
  - a. Wash hands and rinse thoroughly so all soap is rinsed away.
  - b. Open sterile container. Do not touch inside of container.
  - c. Masturbate to ejaculation and deposit all your semen into the container.
  - d. Replace the cover on the container and tighten securely. Keep container upright.
  - e. Label the container with the patient's full name, date of birth, date and time specimen collected. We cannot accept unlabeled or incompletely labeled specimens.
4. Bring the specimen to the laboratory **within 1 hour of collection and maintain it at body temperature during transport.** This can be accomplished by placing the container into a bag then into an inside pocket of the clothing, close to your body. Do not expose samples to extreme heat or cold.
5. Complete the following information at the time you bring the specimen to our lab:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date &amp; Time Collected: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m.

Days of Abstinence: \_\_\_\_\_ Collection Method:  Masturbation  Other \_\_\_\_\_Was this a Complete Collection?  YES  NOIf NO, which portion was lost?  Beginning  Middle  End