

What is involved in having a blood test?

A blood test involves taking blood from a vein in your arm. Our phlebotomists are extensively trained in this skill. All of the equipment used is sterile. It is vital that we make sure all of your personal details are correct, so our staff will ask for your name and date of birth together with any other questions that are specific to the test your doctor or healthcare professional has requested (your doctor may have advised for you to fast for period of time before having your sample taken, for example).

It is important for us to obtain all of this information on each occasion, even if you are a regular patient, to ensure that we have the correct information on our records. Once your details have been confirmed, the phlebotomist will examine your arms to find a suitable vein. If you feel uncomfortable, please do not hesitate to inform the phlebotomist.

A sample is normally taken with you sitting down, but you may prefer to lie down if you are feeling faint or nervous. The process requires that we puncture your skin with a needle. While it isn't very painful, it can be uncomfortable. If you are worried about this, please consult your clinician for pain management advice.

Once a suitable vein is found, the phlebotomist will cleanse the skin with an alcohol swab and then insert a sterile needle into your vein to obtain the sample. Different tubes are required for different types of tests, so there may be more than one tube of blood to be collected. All tubes will be labelled with your name and date of birth. After the blood has been drawn and the needle has been removed, pressure should be applied to the site to minimise bleeding.

A cotton wool ball and tape will be applied. If you are aware of any allergic reactions to alcohol swabs or tapes, please let our phlebotomist know so that we can look at an alternative. It is important that you avoid heavy lifting or strenuous exercise in the following 24 hours to avoid bruising or bleeding. It is normal for a small bruise to be visible at the site of blood collection, this is due to the action of making a hole in the vein to collect the blood.

What do I need to bring with me for my blood test?

You will need to bring the request form or letter of referral that has been signed by your doctor or healthcare professional.

If you have a health insurance, please bring these details with you these will be checked at the hospital reception. We will also ask for your phone number and address. We need this information to ensure we are able to bill you correctly. If you are paying for your tests then your payment will be taken on the day via credit/debit card

I am nervous about having a blood test, is it necessary?

Please inform our phlebotomists if you are feeling nervous or anxious so that we may assist you with the procedure. Our phlebotomists are extensively trained and will endeavour to make you feel at ease. They will encourage you to lie down for the procedure if you are feeling uncomfortable. Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing may also prove to be helpful.

Your doctor or healthcare professional has requested the pathology tests to be carried out to assist with their diagnosis. If you are concerned about the necessity of these tests, we would advise you to discuss this with your doctor.

Am I at risk of catching anything by having my blood taken?

No, it is our policy to utilise single-use sterile equipment when taking a blood sample from patients. No equipment is reused. Our phlebotomists are also highly trained in infection control.

I have very difficult veins. How can you get the required sample?

All of our phlebotomists have had extensive training. They have learnt how to take samples from a comprehensive range of patients, including those with 'difficult' veins. They are advised to only make two attempts at taking your blood sample. You may be requested to return at a later time if we are unsuccessful. Although this may seem to be inconvenient, it aims to reduce the risk of any problems and minimise discomfort for our patients. If you have any concerns about having your sample taken, we encourage you to contact us before attending our hospitals.

How will my samples be tested?

Your doctor has requested specific pathology tests to support your clinical management. Your samples are carefully labelled and transported securely to our laboratories.

At the laboratory, your samples will be uniquely identified to ensure that the correct tests are performed and reported to your doctor or healthcare professional. All our laboratories are accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service to ISO 15189:2022 providing you with the assurance of a safe and compliant testing service. Results are unique to you and any questions regarding your results should be discussed with your doctor.

Will I need sign a consent form for you to take a blood sample?

You have been referred by your doctor or healthcare professional for your blood sample to be taken. By attending and asking us to take your blood sample you have consented to the procedure. This is called assumed consent, it means we do not need to obtain a signature of consent in this circumstance.

Assumed consent is a type of consent that is inferred from signs, actions, or facts, or by inaction or silence. It refers to the assumption that a person has given permission for an action, which is inferred from his or her actions, rather than expressly or explicitly provided. If you have any questions regarding consent our Phlebotomy team will be able to answer any questions on the day.

How long will it be before I get my results?

Turnaround times may vary depending on the tests selected, the phlebotomist collecting your sample will be able to discuss this with you. Please note all turnaround times are estimated and cannot be guaranteed.

How will I get my results?

A copy of your results will be sent to the healthcare professional that requested them, you should contact them for all pathology results and any clinical advice.

How do I compliment or complain about my experience?

Your complete satisfaction is very important to us.

At Nuffield Health, we're continuing to build a healthier nation by aiming to provide the best possible service. If you need to raise a concern or make a formal complaint please follow this link [Complaints procedure | Nuffield Health](https://www.nuffieldhealth.com/contact-us/complaints-procedure) www.nuffieldhealth.com/contact-us/complaints-procedure. We regularly review all your feedback to improve your experience with us.