

# Process for Collecting a Semen Sample

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## What is the process for collecting a sperm sample?

Your semen sample must be in the laboratory within one hour after ejaculation. The specimen is usually collected in the private rooms in the Center for Reproduction Medicine within the Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART) laboratory, but can also be done at home or in the hospital. Providing your specimen at the Center is recommended to avoid delays in transport.

**No** specimen will be accepted, from either home or the collection room, without a scheduled appointment.

## General instructions:

1. Collect your semen sample by masturbation. You can talk about different collection methods with your provider, but they are not recommended.
2. **Do not** use any lubricant, including saliva, when collecting semen.
3. Your sample should be collected in a container provided by the ART laboratory or fertility preservation coordinator.
4. **Do not** collect the specimen in a condom. Condoms contain spermicide, which will alter the results of the analysis. If a condom must be used, the laboratory will provide a special semen collection condom.
5. Clean your hands and penis before collection.
6. Do not touch the inside of the cup.  
If any semen spills, **do not** attempt to put it in the cup. Report the spill to lab staff.
7. Label your specimen collection container with the sticker that has your printed name and registration number on it.

**We cannot accept your specimen if the:**

- Container is cracked, broken or leaking.
- Container is not approved by the ART lab.
- Container is hot or cold to the touch.
- Specimen collected is in a condom that is not approved by ART lab.
- Specimen is brought in without a scheduled appointment.
- Semen is older than 1 hour.

**Specimens collected outside of the ART laboratory at Briarwood:**

1. Bring your specimen to the laboratory within 1 hour after ejaculation.
2. **Do not** expose your specimen to temperature extremes.
3. Place the container upright in a plastic bag, with the lid securely tightened.
  - Keep your specimen close to body temperature by holding it near your body.
  - Your semen sample should not be placed in a purse, pocket, or briefcase.
  - Sperm do not have a long life outside of the body. Delays in delivering semen and exposure to various temperatures will result in lower overall motile sperm count and poor semen cryopreservation.
4. We will contact you within 24 hours with the results of your semen analysis. This will include information regarding the quality and number of sperm in the test vial, as well as information about future use with assisted reproductive technology.

Based on this information, you will be able to decide if you would like to bank more samples of semen. We will update your oncologist throughout the collection process.

### **How do I collect the best sample?**

1. Avoid sexual activity (including masturbation) for at least 2 days, and no more than 10 days before collecting the specimen. Longer or shorter periods of abstinence (going without sexual activity) may result in a lower sperm count or decreased sperm motility.
2. Collect your specimen at the Assisted Reproduction Center (ART) or bring it to the ART laboratory within 1 hour of collection.
3. **Do not** use any lubricant, including saliva, when collecting semen.
4. Avoid exposing your specimen to extreme temperatures after collection. Do not transport your specimen in a purse, pocket or briefcase. If needed, the Fertility Preservation Coordinator is available to assist patients in the hospital with transporting specimens.

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