

24-hour Urine Specimen

A **24-hour urine specimen** is a collection of all your urine (pee)—in a special container—during a 24-hour time span. The specimen can help your doctor know how well your kidneys are working.

Why do I need to collect a 24-hour urine specimen?

The kidneys filter wastes from the body and produce urine. If your kidneys aren't working well, too much protein, calcium, and creatinine leak into the urine. The 24-hour urine specimen allows your doctor to know how much urine your body produces in a single day. It can also show how much protein, calcium, and creatinine your body filters out in a day.



How do I prepare to collect the 24-hour urine specimen?

To collect the 24-hour urine specimen, you'll need to:

- 1 Receive a lab order for this test at your doctor's office or the hospital.**
- 2 Get 2 containers from your doctor's office or from the laboratory or hospital.**
 - **A urine collection container.** One common container is called a **hat**. It looks like a cowboy hat and fits across the top of the toilet bowl. You'll urinate (pee) directly into this container.
 - **A large specimen container.** You'll pour the urine you've collected into this larger container.
- 3 Make sure your full legal name and birth date are on the large specimen container.** Some healthcare providers put a label on the container when they give it to you. If not, just write your full name and birth date directly on the container with a permanent ink pen.
- 4 Plan to stay close to home for the 24-hour collection period.** This will make it easier for you to collect all your urine and to store it properly.

Urine collection container



Large specimen container



What should I do during the 24-hour collection time?

Follow these steps to collect urine during the 24-hour collection time:

- The first time you urinate, use the toilet normally. Do not collect the urine or put it into the larger container.** This starts the 24-hour collection process. Write the date and time directly on the large specimen container.
- The second time you need to urinate, place the collection container (hat) across the top of the toilet bowl.** Urinate into this container, but don't put toilet paper into it. Carefully pour the urine into the large specimen container. Return the "hat" back into the toilet.
- Collect all the urine you pass for the next 24 hours and save it in the specimen container.** Then, do the following:
 - Make sure you collect all your urine. (If you accidentally discard or spill urine, you'll need to start the collection over!) Keeping the hat container in the toilet—and using the same toilet every time—will help you do this.
 - Contact the lab if you need a second specimen container (if you fill up the first one). They can arrange for you or a family member to pick up another container.
 - Store the large specimen container either in the refrigerator or on ice (not dry ice) in a cooler during the collection time.
- At the end of the 24-hour time period make sure you:**
 - Check the time you started the collection (from the second step above) to make sure you get a complete 24-hour collection.
 - Empty your bladder completely one last time into the collection container.
 - Don't collect urine for more than 24 hours.
- Label the specimen container** (not the lid) with your height and weight, and also with the date and time you stopped the collection. This means that your specimen container should now have all of the following information on it (on a label or written directly on the container):
 - Your full legal name and birth date
 - Date and time you started the collection
 - Date and time you finished the collection
 - Your height and weight
- Along with the lab order, deliver the specimen container to the laboratory as soon as possible.** At the lab, ask the lab staff if you also need to provide a blood sample. (A blood test is commonly ordered along with 24-hour urine specimen. If you had blood drawn right before you started the urine collection, you may not need to have it done now.)



Questions for my doctor

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