

Collecting a urine sample



Tests are used by vets to help them diagnose disease in animals that are ill, which means your vet may ask you to bring in a 'urine sample' (water sample) from your pet to help him find out what's wrong with him. Urine samples are usually taken to check for diseases such as diabetes or cystitis. Urine samples are also often used as part of a routine health check to detect hidden disease before the development of obvious symptoms; this allows your pet to be treated earlier and more effectively.

What equipment do I need?

You will need a clean, wide-necked container to collect the sample in, and a clean jar with a tight lid to store it in (your vet will be able to give you one of these if you ask).

It is important not to use jars that have previously contained jam or honey as this can affect the results of the test.

How do I collect a urine sample?

In most cases, your vet will ask for a mid-stream sample (a urine sample) collected by placing a suitable container (a small bowl or dish) under the stream of urine whilst your dog wees. Some dogs and bitches will stop weeing every time you approach them with your container. You may be able to catch them out by using a long handled collecting pot. Attach a pot, for example a clean yoghurt carton, to a stick or broom handle using sticky tape. Take your dog out on a lead and once he or she starts to wee, move the carton under the stream of urine to collect the sample.

How much urine do I need to collect?

In most cases your vet will only need a few teaspoons of urine to perform all the tests. If a larger sample is needed your vet will tell you.

Can I collect a sample from the floor?

Sometimes dogs with incontinence or cystitis will wee on the floor in the house. If you find it absolutely impossible to collect a sample from your pet then a sample collected from the floor may be better than nothing (provided the floor is clean). If you need to collect a sample from the floor you can use a pipette or syringe to suck up the urine and then squirt it into the pot. If you collect the sample in this way then tell your vet as there are some tests that cannot be performed on samples collected from the floor.

What if I can't collect a sample?

If you really cannot get a urine sample your vet will probably suggest that they take your pet into the hospital and collect the sample for you. Samples can be collected directly from the bladder using a catheter passed up the urethra or via a needle placed into the bladder through the tummy wall. Both these procedures are simple and carry few risks for your pet.

How do I take the sample to the vet?

Pour the sample into a clean, screw-topped container; write your dog's name, your name and address and the date the sample was taken on the jar. If you can't take the sample to the vets immediately, it is best to store it in the fridge for a maximum of 12 hours.

If you want any other information on health issues concerning your dog please contact your local Village Vet practice and we will be happy to advise you.