Having a blood test
Blood tests help us diagnose your illness and monitor your treatment. We understand that some people find them unpleasant, and we try to treat you with care and consideration.

## How to find us

### John Radcliffe Hospital
Outpatients Blue Area, Level 2
Monday 9.00am - 1.00pm
Tuesday to Friday 9.00am - 4.45pm

### John Radcliffe Hospital Women’s Centre
Outpatients Level 1
Monday and Friday 9.00am - 1.00pm
Tuesday to Thursday 9.00am - 1.00pm and 1.30pm - 4.30pm

### Children’s Hospital
Paediatric Outpatients LG1
Monday to Thursday 10.00am - 4.45pm
Friday 10.00am - 12.45pm

### Churchill Hospital
Cancer / Haematology Outpatients Level 0
Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 4.45pm
Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm

### Horton General Hospital
Pathology Laboratory
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9.00am - 12.00 noon
What to do when you arrive

**John Radcliffe Hospital:**
please take a ticket from the wall dispenser and wait for your number to be called.

**Women’s Centre:**
please take a seat outside the department and wait to be called

**Children’s Hospital:**
please go to reception

**Churchill Hospital:**
please take a ticket from the wall dispenser and wait in section A

**Horton General Hospital:**
please go to the reception desk.

**Please tell us if** you have had any problems with blood tests before, such as fainting.

**While waiting**
we try to see everyone as quickly as possible, but delays can occur. We will inform you of any delays when you arrive.

**Please remember:**
we can only perform a blood test if you have a **blood request form**. Please check your form has the correct details on it.

**Students**
sometimes we have medical or nursing students with us, learning to take blood. **This is always supervised and we will ask you for your consent.**
Having blood taken

When you enter the blood test room, the phlebotomist (an expert in taking blood samples from patients) will check your name and date of birth. One blood test form may require several different 5ml tubes of blood to be taken, but these can be taken from a single skin puncture.

The phlebotomist will look at the veins in your arm and hand (your left arm if you are right handed, your right arm if you are left handed). The vein used for blood sampling is usually on the inside of your elbow or the back of your hand.

A tourniquet (tight band) is usually placed around your upper arm. This makes the vein fill with blood and makes it easier for the blood sample to be taken.

The skin over the vein is usually cleaned with an antiseptic wipe. A needle is then inserted into the vein through the cleaned skin. The needle is connected directly to blood sample bottles. When the required amount of blood is taken, the needle is removed.

It is sometimes difficult to get a blood sample from some people and the phlebotomist may need to try more than once to ensure enough blood is taken for the tests to be done. A phlebotomist will only make 2 attempts to obtain the sample then will call a more senior colleague to try. We may ask you to come back on another day.

After the blood has been taken, we cover the site with a small dressing. Apply pressure to this for at least three minutes while the phlebotomist is completing the paperwork, as this will reduce the risk of bruising.

Half an hour later you may remove the dressing from your arm. Please avoid heavy lifting for at least an hour.

A small bruise may occur after your blood test, due to blood
leaking from the punctured vein and collecting under the skin. This is normal and will disappear after a few days in the way any other bruise does.

**Special circumstances**

**Contact telephone numbers**

**Babies and young children**
Appointments based in the Children’s Hospital: 01865 231111

**Pregnant women**
Appointment / instructions: 01865 220445

**Glucose tolerance test**
Appointment / instructions: 01865 235568

**Fasting blood tests**
If your doctor asks you to fast before your blood test, please do not eat or drink anything except water on the day of the test.

**Results**

Most blood test results will be sent to the requesting doctor in 7 - 10 days; your doctor can obtain urgent results from the laboratory.

Results must be obtained from your doctor. The phlebotomist is trained to take your blood, but not to discuss your blood test or medical condition.
Comments or suggestions

Please speak to a member of staff if you have any urgent comments or suggestions.

You can also write to:

Phlebotomy Manager
Room 2726, Level 2 Outpatients,
John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way
Headington, Oxford OX3 9DU

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call 01865 221473 or email PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk