

About Your Appointment

Retrograde semen collection

This handout gives instructions to follow when having a retrograde semen collection appointment.

What is retrograde ejaculation?

In some men, the semen passes into their bladder instead of out through their *urethra* (the tube that carries urine from the bladder to outside the body). This is called *retrograde ejaculation*. It occurs if the nerves and muscles that control ejaculation are damaged or removed, or if the prostate is enlarged.

Even if you have this condition, it may be possible for you to have a child using your own sperm. This can be done by removing the sperm from your urine.

What is retrograde semen collection?

If you have retrograde ejaculation and decide to have a child using your sperm, the first step is to get a sample of your semen. This is called *retrograde semen collection*.

- During this appointment, both ejaculate and urine are collected so they can be examined.
- For best results, do **not** ejaculate for 2 to 5 days before your collection appointment. Do not go longer than 5 days without ejaculating, because this may affect the quality of your semen sample.
- Your appointment will be at the Men's Health Center. To schedule your appointment, or if you have any questions, please call 206-543-4671.
- Your semen will be examined at the University of Washington Medical Center Male Fertility Lab.



Your collection appointment is at the Men's Health Center, 4245 Roosevelt Way N.E., on the 3rd floor.

How to Prepare

Before your semen collection, you will need to buy:

- **Sudafed, 60 mg.** This medicine helps close down the neck of the bladder. This makes forward ejaculation (for collection purposes) more likely.
- **Alka-Seltzer tablets.** This antacid raises the acidity of the urine, which helps sperm survive better.

You can buy both of these items without a prescription at any pharmacy.

Two Days Before Your Appointment

- Begin taking a 60 mg Sudafed pill 3 times a day (a total of 180 mg in 1 day).

One Day Before Your Appointment

- Begin taking Alka-Seltzer tablets, 2 at a time, 2 times a day (a total of 4 in 1 day).
- Continue to take a 60 mg Sudafed pill 3 times a day.

On the Day of Your Appointment

- When you wake up, empty your bladder.
- Take 1 Sudafed and 2 Alka Seltzer tablets.
- Eat a normal breakfast.
- Come to the Men's Health Center for your appointment.

What to Expect

- We will give you a sterile container for collecting your semen sample. You will collect your sample using self-stimulation (masturbation).
- You must collect all of the ejaculate in the semen collection container. If any misses the container, please tell us. We will need to know that when we review your lab results.
- Try not to use any lubricant when you collect your semen sample. If you need to use a lubricant, do **not** allow any of it to mix with your semen sample.
- Next, we will give you a sterile container for collecting your urine sample. Only the first part of your urine stream is needed – about 1 ounce (30 mL) is enough. You do not need to fill the container.
- We will examine both your ejaculate and your urine.

Results and Follow-up

- It can take 7 to 14 days to get your results, depending on what type of testing is done.
- You may want to schedule a follow-up visit with your doctor 2 weeks after your collection. At this visit, your doctor will go over your test results and talk with you about a treatment plan. Call 206-598-6358 to schedule this visit.

Paying for Your Appointment

You will need to pay for your semen evaluation at your sample collection appointment.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Men's Health Center:
206-598-6358

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to
5 p.m.

After hours and on weekends
or holidays, call this same
number or go to the
Emergency Room.

For more information, visit
[http://depts.washington.edu/
uroweb](http://depts.washington.edu/uroweb).