

Home blood tests for kidney transplant patients

This leaflet explains more about doing a blood test at home, for tacrolimus and creatinine levels. Please use this information together with your blood test pack, and read it to the end before you start to take the swab. If you have any questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What are tacrolimus and creatinine?

Tacrolimus is a medicine that you have been prescribed to prevent rejection after transplant surgery. If you take too much your kidney may be damaged. If you do not take enough your risk of kidney rejection is increased.

Creatinine is a waste substance produced by the muscles, and normally removed by the kidneys. If kidney function gets worse, the creatinine level in your blood goes up.

Why are we introducing home blood testing?

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has led to changes in how we manage our services. One of these changes is the introduction of home blood tests so that you do not have to come to the hospital for them.

How does the test work?

The test involves a finger prick to collect a blood sample on two small swabs. You then post them on the same day to our lab to be tested. To watch a video of how to take a swab, scan the QR code on your mobile phone, or go to www.neoteryx.com/how-to-properly-take-a-blood-sample-using-the-mitra-microsampler-vams



Your pack contents:

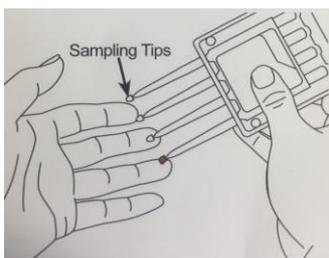
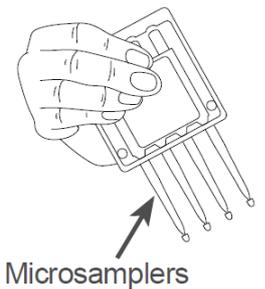
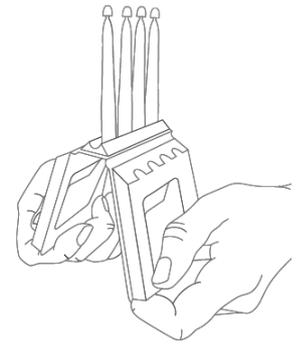
- 2 lancets
- 1 clamshell with 2 tips
- 1 plaster
- 1 prepaid envelope
- 1 instruction leaflet
- 1 request form
- 2 patient labels (1 on the clamshell, 1 on the request form)

If you take tacrolimus **twice** a day, please take the blood sample **12 hours after** the last dose.
If you take tacrolimus **once** a day, please take the blood sample **24 hours after** the last dose.

What do you need to do?

Please follow the instructions below when you are ready to take the samples.

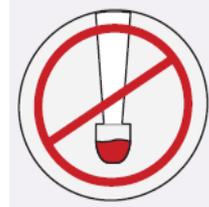
1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water and dry them thoroughly afterwards. To improve blood flow, rub them together until warm.
2. Open the plastic Mitra 'clamshell' container. There should be two swab tips. Please use both (one swab for each test). Put this to one side, taking care not to let the tips touch any other surfaces. **Do not remove the swabs from the clamshell.**
3. Prepare the lancet (plastic finger-pricker) by twisting off the tab. Get a cotton wool ball or tissue ready, to clean your finger afterwards. Place the safety lancet on **the side** of any chosen finger (doing it directly on the pulp of your finger is okay, but may hurt a little more) and press until you hear a 'click'. This will prick your finger. If you would like to see how to use the lancet, go here, [w:](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5Rnjo7mNsc&feature=emb_logo) www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5Rnjo7mNsc&feature=emb_logo or scan the QR code below:
4. Squeeze the finger upwards to increase the flow of blood. You can also try lowering your hand down briefly to see if this increases blood flow. You may need to use a second lancet or a different finger if there is not enough blood.
5. Point the swab tip down towards the floor and press it against the blood spot, and let it absorb the blood. Do this for two swabs. Hold the swab tips until they are fully coated. It is okay to go back and refill the tips as we need the swab fully coated with blood. **Do NOT drop blood onto the tip from above**



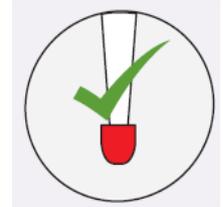
Too much blood



Not enough blood



Correct blood



- 6 Please dispose of the lancet in a sharps box. If you don't have one, please contact your GP to get one – we have sent them a letter about this. Please do not dispose of the lancet in your household waste.
- 7 Check your patient sticker is correct and write the time and date of the sample taken on the request form. Put the **closed** clamshell and the request form in the envelope provided and seal it.
- 8 Post the prepaid envelope on the **same day**.
- 9 Your results will be available 2-4 days later. They will be reviewed by your clinician who will contact you if needed. You can access your results at www.patientview.org. PatientView is a free online resource. Please contact the kidney clinic to register.

Posting the sample

Before you post the sample, please check the following:

- You have used both the tips included in the clamshell and the tips remain in the clamshell.
- There is a patient label with your details on the clamshell **and** one on the request form.
- You have added the date and time to the request form.
- You have put the clamshell and the request form in the envelope provided.
- There is a sticker with the lab address on the envelope provided.
- You have sealed the envelope and are posting it on the **same day** you take the sample.

Images provided by Neoteryx, LCC

Contact us

If you have any questions about doing your home blood tests for tacrolimus and creatinine levels, please contact the transplant clinic, **tel:** 020 7188 8822, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch.

t: 020 7188 8815 **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111 **w:** www.111.nhs.uk

NHS website

This website gives information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing.

w: www.nhs.uk

Leaflet number: 5076/VER3

Date published: November 2020

Review date: December 2021

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A list of sources is available on request