

Collecting a Urine Sample

Urine samples are a great diagnostic tool, and can provide your veterinary team with a lot of information about the health status of your cat. The results may be used to diagnose a urinary tract infection, assess hydration levels, check concentration of urine, and assess kidney function, along with many other things.

Your vet may require a urine sample from your cat, and there are a few ways to do this:

- A free-catch sample
- Non-absorbent cat litter
- Cystocentesis

Free catch sample

If your cat has urinated in its pet carrier or on a consult room table, we may be able to draw that sample into a syringe for testing. This is a fairly easy way of collecting urine. However, it does mean there is likely contamination from the surface the urine is collected on so may be inappropriate if your vet is checking for bacteria.

Non-absorbent litter

This is a simple method of urine collection that you can do yourself at home:

- Thoroughly clean your cat's litter tray, removing as much dust as possible
- Fill with non-absorbent cat litter (KatKor)



- Keep your cat indoors for the day, and check regularly to see if they have passed urine
- Use the provided syringe to collect the sample, and deposit into the provided sample tube

Top Tip – For the most reliable results, we need fresh urine, no more than four hours old. If you are unable to bring your pet's sample back to us in that time, simply pop it in the fridge, and deliver it to us within 24 hours for testing.

Cystocentesis

This method is used by the vet when we need a sterile sample from your cat. The vet uses a small needle to enter the bladder through the body wall in order to collect a sample directly from the bladder.

This is a very simple procedure that can sometimes be performed during the consultation and it often does not require any sedation if your cat tolerates it. Sometimes it may be necessary to place an ultrasound probe over the area to visualise the bladder when inserting the needle.

Collecting a Faecal Sample

Faecal samples may be necessary to check your cat for parasites, bacterial infections and other gastrointestinal abnormalities.

This may be requested by your vet if your cat is unwell and/or suffering abnormalities, such as diarrhoea.

Choosing the sample

Try to select a fresh sample, make sure their litter trays are checked regularly:

If the faeces is dried out/white, it is likely to be old. The fresher the sample, the more accurate the results.

Top Tip – If your cat usually toilets outside, you can replace their cat litter with soil and leaves to encourage them to use their tray. Alternatively, if they will pass faeces in your own garden, keep a watchful eye on them, and the sample may be collected straight from the garden.

Sample size

A sample around the same size as a marble will be adequate for most tests. More is fine, but no less. If your sample is too small, put it into the sample pot, secure the lid and store in the fridge until your cat defecates again.

Contamination

The sample should be as clear from debris as possible, (though a little bit of cat litter is usually ok).

If your cat is suffering from diarrhoea, try removing the cat litter from their tray, use less, or provide shredded paper instead of their usual litter.

Collecting the sample

If your vet has requested a faecal sample during a consultation, you will be provided with a faecal collection pot. There is a spoon built into the lid to help you scoop the sample you need and put it into the pot securely.

If you do not have a faecal collection pot, don't worry. A clean Tupperware, or a poo bag will be fine. It is always advisable to wear gloves when collecting your sample.

In some cases, your vet may ask you to collect a 'pooled sample'. This is when you collect a small sample each day for three consecutive days. The three samples may all go into one tube for testing. Simply store the pot in the fridge between sample collections.

Once you have collected your sample/s, bring the secure pot in to the practice as soon as possible. If you cannot bring it the same day, put it in the fridge, and deliver it to us within 24 hours.

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