Information for Patients and Users

Location

- All samples to be delivered to 100A, New Cavendish Street, Marylebone, London, W1W 6NR
- Samples also processed at 24-32, Stephenson Way, Euston, London, NW1 2HD

Service offered

- In house:
  - Blood sciences (Biochemistry, Haematology, Allergy) and Virology
- Referred
  - Specialist Blood sciences (Biochemistry, Haematology, Allergy, Immunology, Serology), Microbiology and specialist Virology

Opening hours

- 100A is open from 08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday and 10:00 to 12:00 on Saturday

Examinations offered by the laboratory

- Please see "ALLERGY TEST INFORMATION" on previous page for details.

Instructions for request form

- In order for us to provide you with a quality service, it is important that we receive a completed request form including:
  - Patient's forename and surname
  - Date of birth
  - Hospital number (if known)
  - Sample collection time and date
  - Type of sample and, if appropriate, anatomical site
  - Clinical information relevant to the request

Self-adhesive address labels will be accepted on request forms. However, we discourage their use on specimen bottles and containers as they are often not compatible with our technology.

Instructions for the preparation of the patient

- Please see "ALLERGY TEST INFORMATION" on previous page for details.

Instruction for patient-collected samples

- Not applicable

Instructions for transportation of samples

- At Unilabs we ask our users to follow the correct handling procedures to ensure:
    - The specimens are received and processed appropriately to support timely diagnosis
    - The risk to healthcare associated infections is minimised
    - To ensure correct labelling and positive patient identification
- Most pathology specimens are generally classified 'Biological Substance, Category B' and should be handled and packaged in accordance with UN3373 regulations. Any sample which is to be transported to Unilabs for diagnostic purposes must adhere to the following instructions for packaging.

  1. Primary Packaging

  A specimen container or 'specimen pot' should be of relevant size to the specimen and contain the appropriate fixative. Ensure that the lid is securely tightened to avoid leakage during transportation.

  2. Secondary Packaging

  A polythene bag provides the secondary packaging layer into which the specimen container is placed. There should be absorbent tissue paper within this bag to soak up any leakage should this occur. This bag will need to be sealed and the corresponding request form placed into the outer side pocket of the bag.

  3. Outer packaging

  This should be a hard outer packaging. For same day collections in London, Unilabs-IHS couriers provide these containers. For specimens being sent using the overnight courier or postal service appropriate UN3373-compliant transport containers can be provided by Unilabs-IHS on request.

  4. Specimen labelling

  It is imperative that all specimen/sample pots are clearly labelled, on the container and not the lid, using addressographs where possible.

- Couriers
  Unilabs employs full-time couriers who are fully trained in handling UN3373 diagnostic specimens. The 'local' foot couriers visit consultant practices and hospitals within a one mile radius of the laboratory on request daily to collect specimens and replenish stock supplies. Our drivers collect specimens within central and greater London.

- Same day and overnight couriers

For clients throughout the UK, we subcontract to a reputable medical courier company. The couriers are fully trained in transportation of Category B UN3373 diagnostic specimens, carry medical transport containers and are supplied with emergency spill kits. Our courier suppliers are certified with QMS (Quality Management Systems) ISO14001 and UKAS Quality Management ISO9001:2008.

- Urgent Samples

For samples requiring urgent results, please indicate this clearly on both the sample request form and corresponding dispatch log, also ensuring that the method of contacting the clinician with the result is clearly stated, along with the date the report is required.

Patient consent

Patient consent is required for specific tests requiring disclosure of clinical information and family history to referral laboratories. In these circumstances specific consent form must be completed. For all other tests consent has been implied by the requesting clinician on behalf of the patient.

Laboratory rejection criteria

- Specimens may not be suitable for testing if they are inadequately labelled or if they have leaked or been contaminated or if they are too old. In these circumstances every effort will be made to inform the requesting clinician before discarding the sample. For “precious” samples such as CSF, analysis will be carried out at the discretion of the laboratory manager and the report annotated with a comment.

Factors known to affect the examination or interpretation of results

Interferences with clinical laboratory tests can create discrepancies in test results which can lead to patient harm.

Interferents may originate from endogenous and exogenous sources:

- In vivo (physiological) drug effects, such as a change in circulating hormone concentration in response to a drug
- Chemical alteration of the measurand (eg, by hydrolysis, oxidation, photodecomposition)
- Physical alteration of the measurand, such as enzyme denaturation due to extreme temperature exposure
- Evaporation or dilution of the specimen
- Contamination with additional measurands (eg, from intravenous infusion)
- Loss of a substance from prolonged contact with blood cells (ie, red and white blood cells or platelets consuming glucose)

- Analytes that are released from blood cells (eg, platelet granula content)
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Clinical Advice

Clinical advice can be obtained before ordering examinations and on interpretation of results by contacting the laboratory directly on:

- Telephone 020 7121 6340
- Email clin.pathuk@unilabs.com

Personal Information

Unilabs is fully compliant with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and as such meets the requirements for processing of personal data:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject.
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes; further processing for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes shall, in accordance with Article 89(1), not be considered to be incompatible with the initial purposes
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date; every reasonable step must be taken to ensure that personal data that are inaccurate, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed, are erased or rectified without delay
- kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed; personal data may be stored for longer periods insofar as the personal data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes in accordance with Article 89(1) subject to implementation of the appropriate technical and

organisational measures required by this Regulation in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of the data subject

- processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures

Laboratory's complaint procedure

If you are unhappy about the service you have received from us you have the right to make a complaint, have it investigated and receive a response. We very much take the view that when there has been cause for complaint, it is important for us to acknowledge this, to put things right quickly and to learn from the experience.

All complaints will be fully investigated by the Clinical Governance team.

How do I make a complaint?

A complaint can be made via email to the appropriate Laboratory Manager, as detailed on the Contact Us page.

If you wish to make a verbal complaint, please telephone 020 7299 4490

If you wish to complain in writing, you can write to:-

Jonathan Upton

24-32 Stephenson Way

Euston

London

NW1 2HD

To make a complaint electronically please send the details in an email to clin.pathuk@unilabs.com

When making a complaint it would be very helpful if you could provide us with as much information as possible in order for us to carry out a complete investigation.

Who can complain?

Anyone who has used the service we provide can make an informal complaint.

How soon should I complain?

It is important to make the complaint as soon as possible after the event has occurred. We will normally only investigate those complaints that are either:

• Made not later than 12 months after the event, or :-

• Made within 12 months of you realising that you have something to complain about

The sooner you register your complaint the better so we can investigate the matter whilst it is still fresh in people's minds.

What happens next?

Regardless of how you make a formal, or informal complaint, our response is always the same.

Within three working days of a complaint being received you can expect a written response, acknowledging the complaint.

Once a complaint is made a full investigation is undertaken and a timeline of events will be established.

Once the investigation is complete you will receive a written report, stating the findings and outcomes of the investigation.

Explanation of clinical procedure

Unilabs has extensive information available for the patient and user that includes explanation of the clinical procedure to be performed. This will enable informed consent.

For more details please contact clin.pathuk@unilabs.com. This information will be made available on our website in due course.