

How do I get my results?

Results are sent to the Practice usually within five working days.

If the doctor feels it is appropriate they will send you an **SMS text message** regarding your blood tests via your mobile phone. If you would like to use this service please ensure that Reception have up to date contact details for you and that you have consented to receive text messages from the Surgery. Please note that if you have more than one test carried out on your sample, you will receive a text message for every result. Each test may have different outcomes and it is important to contact the Surgery if it is not clear.

Alternatively, you can telephone the Surgery **after 2.00 pm** Mon-Fri and request details of your results over the phone. Not all staff are authorised to release blood test results, so you may be called back by a more senior colleague. Our Receptionists are not clinically trained so cannot answer any medical related questions regarding your tests. However, you can obtain a printed copy of your blood test results in full, by visiting the Surgery in person. Please book a further appointment your GP if you have queries regarding your results.

What do my results mean?

It is usual for a batch of blood tests to be carried out together - so you may receive more than one result and each may have different outcomes. There are usually three outcomes of which we use to report:

Normal – usually this will mean that no further action is required.

Borderline – Often in this case your GP will ask that you re-take the test or make another appointment to see them. Sometimes they will feel that this is satisfactory or expected and so no further action will need to be taken.

Abnormal – This outcome sounds more worrying than it usually is. The doctor may want to discuss this with you and it could mean a change in your medication or a referral for further tests.

If a GP needs to follow you up regarding your blood test, they will usually contact you directly or ask Reception to call you in for an appointment.

BEVERSBROOK MEDICAL CENTRE



Having a Blood Test

A Guide for Patients

Why do I need a blood test?

There are a number of reasons why your doctor may request that you have a blood test. These are usually to aid diagnosis, monitor treatment and to exclude certain conditions. Your doctor will explain to you why they feel you need a blood sample tested and will ask you to make an appointment with Reception. You will need to know if your doctor wants you to have a fasting or non-fasting blood test.

How do I make an appointment?

We offer morning blood tests appointments Monday to Friday. Unfortunately, we cannot offer appointments to take blood in the afternoon. Blood tests are rarely urgent so please be prepared to book in advance. You can book a blood test appointment either via the Reception desk after your appointment or by telephoning the Surgery at your convenience. For those patients who wish to book their appointments on-line you can easily do so by logging in to your patient online account. Alternatively, you can send us an appointment request via our website www.beverbrook.com or send us an e-mail to beversbook@nhs.net.

How is a blood sample taken?

This process is called Venepuncture i.e taking blood from a vein. Here at Beversbrook Medical Centre blood samples are taken by a procedure known as Phlebotomy and tests are usually carried out by our trained Health Care Assistant or Practice Nurse.

An elasticated strap/cuff (tourniquet) is placed around your arm, just above the elbow. The area is cleaned and then a small needle is inserted into a vein on the inner arm. Blood is withdrawn into sample tube(s) and the needle is then removed. Pressure is applied at the site with a piece of cotton wool or gauze until the bleeding has stopped and then a small plaster is applied. **Please tell the clinician taking blood if you are allergic to sticking plaster.**

The clinician will always use a new sterile needle and remove the cover before taking your blood sample. Once your sample has been taken you will see the clinician dispose of the needle into a container for sharp objects.

Will it hurt?

The initial insertion of the needle involves a pin prick sensation but after that the rest of the procedure should be quite painless. On rare occasions some patients experience discomfort following the procedure. This usually settles quite quickly, but if it persists for more than a few days you should consult your doctor.

Sometimes a small bruise or lump (haematoma) may develop after taking a sample of blood. Applying firm pressure to the site until the bleeding has stopped should help to minimise this. Bruising is harmless and will disperse with time. It does not usually require additional treatment.

Fasting – what does it mean?

If your doctor has requested a fasting blood test, this means that for 10-12 hours before your blood is taken you **should not**:

- Eat food
- Drink anything other than water
- Chew chewing gum (even sugar free)
- Eat mints, cough drops, cough linctus or throat lozenges
- Smoke

However **you may**:

- Drink plain water
- Take prescribed medication, with water, before the test – unless otherwise directed by your doctor. If you are on medications which should be taken with food or if you are diabetic please seek advice from your doctor prior to your appointment.

What happens to the blood samples?

The samples are sent to the Royal United Hospital pathology laboratory in Bath. The lab processes the samples and sends the results to the doctor who requested the blood be taken. This process usually takes three working days, but may take longer depending on the hospital workload.