

Saliva Collection Instructions

For late-night cortisol testing (Cushing's syndrome evaluation)

Your doctor has ordered a late-night salivary cortisol test. This test measures the level of the stress hormone cortisol in your saliva at a specific time of night. Cortisol normally drops very low at night — if it remains elevated, this may indicate Cushing's syndrome.

Collection Time

■ **Collect your saliva sample between 11:00 PM and midnight. The timing is critical — samples collected at the wrong time will not be valid.**

Before Collection — What to Avoid

- Eating or drinking anything (plain water is OK)
- Brushing your teeth or using mouthwash
- Smoking or chewing tobacco
- Vigorous exercise

Collection Steps

- 1. Open the collection tube:** Remove the cap from the swab tube provided by the lab.
- 2. Place the swab in your mouth:** Put the cotton swab under your tongue for 2–3 minutes until it is thoroughly moistened.
- 3. Return swab to tube:** Place the swab back into the tube and seal it tightly.
- 4. Label the tube:** Write your name, date of birth, and exact collection time on the tube label.
- 5. Refrigerate or freeze:** Store the tube in the refrigerator overnight. Bring it to the lab the next morning.

Medications

Continue all medications as normal. If you use hydrocortisone, prednisone, or any other steroid, notify your doctor — this may affect results. Topical steroids (creams, nasal sprays) can also potentially affect results; mention these to your doctor as well.

Record Here: Collection date: _____ Exact time collected: _____ PM