



Best Practices for Specimen Collection

Neurotransmitter Profiles

The following collection recommendations are specific to Doctor's Data. Adhering to these recommendations ensures test results correlate with established reference ranges. *Never discontinue prescription medications without first consulting your provider.*

BEFORE AND DURING COLLECTION	
2 days before and during collection	Avoid avocados, eggplant, tomatoes, bananas, melons, pineapple, grapefruit, plums, fruit juice, nuts, nut butters, wine, cheese, rice, and chocolate
1 day before and during collection	Avoid strenuous exercise, alcohol, caffeinated beverages, and nicotine products. On the day before and during testing, it is recommended to avoid all supplements and medications until after all samples have been collected (including those that regulate allergy, mood, sleep, pain and inflammation.) Never discontinue prescription medications without consulting your physician.

Talk to your doctor if you feel you will be unable to avoid strenuous exercise, alcohol, caffeinated beverages, and nicotine products for 24 hours before collection, as these things have been shown to influence neurotransmitter secretion.

For patients on psychoactive medications (i.e., SSRIs, benzodiazepines, etc.):

- Many medications can be stopped for the purposes of testing, but psychoactive medications are handled differently. Psychoactive medications should not be stopped suddenly and should be continued as usual the day before collection to ensure results reflect neurotransmitter levels under the influence of these medications. On the day of collection, be sure to take any morning medication doses after the first morning urine collection. (Timing of medication dosing does not need to be adjusted if collecting a 24-hour urine sample.)
- For medications prescribed on an as-needed (prn) basis (i.e., certain anxiety medications): Try to collect urine as far from the last dose of prn prescriptions as possible.
- If tapering off psychoactive medications: Testing can be done during this process to help guide amino acid and co-factor therapy to assist with this transition. Please collect urine between tapered doses - i.e., if one takes medication every other day, test on the day following medication use.
- To test endogenous (levels without the influence of supplements) neurotransmitter levels: It is recommended to wait 6-8 weeks after discontinuing psychoactive meds to test endogenous neurotransmitter levels.

Health Disclaimer: All information given about health conditions, treatments, products and dosages are not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.



For patients on amino acid or melatonin supplementation:

To test endogenous levels away from the influence of supplements:

- Because amino acids metabolize at different rates and melatonin can convert into serotonin, both amino acid and melatonin supplementation need to be avoided for at least one week prior to spot urine collection. It is also recommended to avoid supplements throughout the day when performing a 24-hour urine collection.

To test therapeutic levels (to see how supplementation is impacting neurotransmitters):

- Make sure you have been taking supplements daily leading up to collection.
- Ensure at least a 24-hour dosage interval between last dose and time of urine collection. Supplementation can be resumed after AM collection. For a 24-hour urine collection, supplementation should be paused until the collection is completed.
- Note: It may take 6 months or longer to see improvements in neurotransmitter levels with amino acid and cofactor treatment, whereas symptoms may start to improve as soon as weeks into therapy. Lifestyle and dietary changes are often necessary, along with amino acid and cofactor support, to establish and maintain optimal neurotransmitter balance.

For patients who use recreational substances:

To test endogenous levels away from the influence of substances:

- Ask your provider how long to avoid recreational substances prior to urine collection. Typically, it takes 5 to 7 half-lives for a substance to be eliminated from the blood.

To test neurotransmitters with current substance use:

- It is recommended to test neurotransmitters as far from the last use as possible. If recreational substance use is infrequent, please check with your provider to determine the best day to test.

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