

## PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS

### COLLECTION OF BLOOD SAMPLE FOR DIGOXIN TEST

The following collection instructions are intended to help you collect the correct specimen for the test your clinician has requested.

First read the instructions carefully, make sure you are prepared, and then follow each of the steps to ensure proper collection.

#### Notes:

Your clinician has prescribed the heart medication digoxin for you. The digoxin dose needed to treat heart conditions is different for different people.

Your clinician may do a blood test, or a series of blood tests, to make sure you have the right amount of digoxin in your body. These tests measure the amount of digoxin you have in your blood at a particular point in time. The scientific term is 'Therapeutic Drug Monitoring' (TDM).

You do not need to be fasting but you must have the test done at least six (6) hours after your last dose of digoxin. And, for the best monitoring of results, your tests should always be done at about the same time of day.

Since laboratories are quite busy first thing in the morning (because so many tests require fasting), you might like to consider choosing a different time of the day for you tests to be taken.

#### Instructions:

Ask your clinician about taking digoxin in the evening. Then you can come to the laboratory the next day (more than 6 hours after your last dose).

Always come to the laboratory at least 6 hours after your last dose. Write down the time you took your last dose of digoxin. Tell the laboratory staff when you took your last dose. They will record the time for your clinician.

Try to come to the laboratory at the same time of day whenever the test is repeated. This allows a better comparison with your previous test results.

#### Questions & Answers

##### Why do I have to have a digoxin test?

*Your clinician has prescribed the heart medication digoxin for you. The digoxin dose needed to treat heart conditions is different for different people. Your clinician has requested a blood test to make sure you have the right amount of digoxin in your body. This blood test has to be done at least 6 hours after your last dose of digoxin.*

##### When should the test be done?

*If the test results are to be useful to your doctor, the test must be performed more than 6 hours after your last dose of digoxin. Ask your clinician about taking digoxin in the evening. Then you can come to the laboratory the next day.*

##### Do I need to be fasting?

*Not for this test. But it does need to be taken at least six (6) hours after your last dose of digoxin.*

##### What you can I do to help?

*Write down the time you took your last dose of digoxin. Tell the laboratory staff when you took your last dose. They will record the time for your clinician.*

Always come to the laboratory at least 6 hours after your last dose. Ask your clinician about taking digoxin in the evening. Then you can come to the laboratory the next morning-more than 6 hours after your last dose.

If you have a series of tests, try to come to the laboratory at the same time of day whenever the test is repeated. This allows a better comparison with your previous test results.