



Blood sample collection for patients with Muscular Dystrophy

A guide for patients

Patients with Muscular Dystrophy and other major forms of Muscular Dystrophy including Duchenne and Spinal Muscular Atrophy often report painful and traumatic blood collection experiences. Here are some tips to help you prepare for a collection in order to improve the chances of a successful/pain free collection.

Stay hydrated

Drink plenty of water before your blood draw—being dehydrated may cause veins to be flatter than normal.

Warm your arm

Warming your arm before the blood draw can help—try using a heat pack (for example, a wheat bag).

Communicate with phlebotomy staff

Alert the phlebotomist if you have had a previous negative experience with blood collection. You can request the most experienced phlebotomist by calling ahead at your nearest collection centre.

Pathology Queensland collection centres can be found at <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/pathology-queensland/patients/collection-centres>

Use a numbing cream

Numbing creams can be applied 30 minutes prior to attending for collection.

Consider an alternative stick site

Ask if it's possible to have blood drawn from another site, for example, the back of your hand if you know this has worked better for you in the past.

Which test is most important?

Phlebotomists can communicate with your doctor to prioritise the most important test(s). A finger prick or skin puncture collection may be performed if the tests requested can be performed on low volumes of blood.

Special devices might benefit you

Talk to your doctor about whether you might benefit from ultrasound assisted blood collection if traditional collection methods remain ineffective.

If you have any questions, please talk to your doctor or phlebotomist.