# Laboratory of Analysis
# BIOAESIS srl

# SERVICE CHARTER

Via Rocco Scotellaro, 1/A
Jesi (AN) – 60035
info@bioaesis.com – laboratorio@bioaesis.com
www.bioaesis.com

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# 1. PRESENTATION

The BIOAESIS Laboratory, part of the biotechnology company Bioaesis srl, has been operating for over 20 years as an authorized facility of the Regione Marche. It was among the first to provide specialized services in molecular biology and cytogenetics, thanks to its highly qualified staff and state-of-the-art equipment.

It currently operates as a basic laboratory with specialist sectors in molecular biology, medical genetics, and cytogenetics, offering services both under agreement with the National Health Service (SSN) and privately. It provides services to citizens, nursing homes, companies, and other analysis laboratories for subcontracted tests, in addition to a home blood-drawing service.

The Service Charter is a document that Italian law requires to be drawn up, particularly within healthcare facilities, to protect the right to health. This tool, thanks to the kind and valuable participation of users, allows us to improve the quality of the services offered.

The Service Charter is an instrument that safeguards the right to health, granting the Citizen/User the possibility of effectively monitoring the services provided and their quality, as it is subject to continuous verification, improvements, and updates.

From the very beginning of its activity, the BIOAESIS Laboratory has distinguished itself for the efficiency of the services offered to its clients and for the punctual application of both structural and organizational regulations.

The laboratory's primary objective is the complete satisfaction of its clients. This is demonstrated through the quality of its services, the continuous professional development of its staff, the maintenance of ISO 9000 quality certifications, the "excellence" level accreditation within the National Health Service (SSN), and, lastly, through its willingness to provide services to patients with medical prescriptions (including exempt patients) even after the monthly budget assigned by the AST has been reached.

For this reason, the quality standards of the healthcare services, characterized by the innovative drive of biotechnology, are constantly updated by:

- continuously introducing new analytical methods for the diagnosis of conditions of broad health interest as the microbiota test
- optimizing organizational processes
- increasing the involvement, motivation, and training of all staff
- ensuring transparency in company processes
- implementing internal (and external) Quality Control procedures for all analytical determinations for which verification is possible

The elements that make our organization a well-defined and qualified entity in the region include:

- BIOAESIS is the first private laboratory authorized by the Marche Region to provide healthcare services within the field of molecular biology
- a state-of-the-art technical infrastructure with significant scientific impact
- highly qualified personnel consisting of molecular biologists specializing in biotechnology, holding post-graduate academic degrees (PhDs, post-graduate specialization diplomas, first-level and second-level university master's degrees, certifications related to quality-management systems) and possessing consolidated experience in molecular diagnostics and healthcare in general.

## Organizational chart

Considering the type and volume of analyses and tests carried out within the Laboratory, Management has defined its staffing structure based on the professional skills required and deemed necessary for this purpose. The Organizational Chart of an Analysis Laboratory is the graphic-descriptive representation of how it is structured and highlights the key aspects of its functions and activities, as well as their interrelationships.
Here is the **company's workforce**:

| | |
|---|---|
| Medical Director<br>(Biologist, Specialist in Biochemistry and Clinical Chemistry, Second-Level Master's in Omics Data Analysis, first-level Master's in Artificial Intelligence and Telemedicine) | Dr. Daniela Bianchi |
| Corporate Quality Manager | Dr. Daniela Bianchi |
| Risk Manager | Dr. Daniela Bianchi |
| Biologist<br>(PhD in Molecular Biology, Second-Level Master's in Omics Data Analysis, Head of Quality Control, RSPP) | Dr. Caterina Trozzi |
| Physician | Dr. Bruno Borioni |
| Laboratory Technician | Dr. Raffaele Sabbatini |
| Biologist | Dr. Marco Radi |
| Biologist | Dr. Rita Lupinetti |
| Production Department | Dr. Idowu Wariz Adedosu |
| Production Department | Dr. Giulia Notarpietro |
| Production Department | Dr. Silvia Romualdi |
| Phlebotomy Service | Dr. Giorgia Tiz |
| Phlebotomy Service | Dr. Angelica Balestra |
| Sales Manager | Dr. Daniela Bianchi |
| Administration Department | Acct. Stefania Spurio |
| Administration Department | Dr. Serenella Tassi |
| Logistics/Warehouse Officer | Acct. Alessio Giorgetti |
| Engineer/ Executive Technical Assistant | Dr. Gianmarco Lorenzetti |
| DPO | Ms. Eleonora Luciani |

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF THE SERVICE CHARTER

The provision of services by "Bioaesis srl" is progressively aligned with the principles established by the Directive of the President of the Council of Ministers dated January 27, 1994.

- equality: services are provided according to the same rules for everyone, regardless of sex, race, language, religion, or political opinions. Equality must be understood as the prohibition of any unjustified discrimination and not as uniformity of services in terms of personal and social conditions;
- impartiality: in the delivery of services to users, an objective, impartial, neutral, and humane attitude is maintained;
- continuity: services are provided continuously over time;
- right of choice: where permitted by current legislation, the user has the right to choose the service provider they prefer. The right of choice specifically concerns services distributed throughout the territory;
- participation: users are guaranteed the ability to participate in the delivery of the service. The right of access is exercised according to the procedures established by current legislation and by the regulations adopted by the Facility;
- efficiency and effectiveness: the service is provided in such a way as to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the performance;
- user satisfaction: the Laboratory conducts user satisfaction surveys through questionnaires and/or direct interviews, taking into consideration any reports and suggestions that arise.

The Bioaesis srl Analysis Laboratory adopts all appropriate measures to achieve these objectives.

## 3. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF USERS

Users have the right to:

- ❖ To be welcomed and treated respectfully and kindly, with competence and attention, in full respect of human dignity.
- ❖ To have their privacy protected.
- ❖ To submit reports and/or complaints.

- To obtain from the Laboratory information related to the services provided, the access procedures, and the competence of the staff.
- To be able to immediately identify the personnel they interact with, who must therefore wear a lab coat/clothing with the facility's logo and display an identification badge.
- To receive accurate information regarding the organization of the healthcare facility.

Users have the duty to:

- Behave responsibly.
- Cooperate with the medical, nursing, and administrative staff with whom they interact.
- Respect the premises, equipment, and furnishings, as they are common property.
- Report any dysfunctions they become aware of and support the actions implemented to resolve them.
- Respect the healthcare staff and avoid requesting services that are not due, as well as avoid requesting services that are due in an improper manner or at inappropriate times, as this may cause disruptions for all users.
- Respect other users.
- Wear a mask if required by current regulations and/or company procedures.
- Refrain from smoking and turn off mobile phones inside the facility.
- Respect the facility's opening hours and service delivery times.
- Check the receipt to verify the accuracy of personal data.
- Request from the reception staff, at the time of registration, the issuance of fiscal documents describing the services provided, if needed for insurance reimbursement purposes.
- If accompanied by pets, arrange for their prior custody, considering that the entry of animals into the facility is prohibited for hygiene and health reasons.

# 4. OUR SERVICES

The Bioaesis srl Laboratory is a private facility accredited with the National Health Service of the Marche Region and provides basic Laboratory Medicine services as well as specialized services in Molecular Biology, Cytogenetics, and Medical Genetics.

The facility offers a wide range of laboratory services and examinations, organized into the following branches and specialist areas:

- Hematology
- Coagulation
- Clinical Chemistry
- Serology
- Immunology
- Molecular Biology (specialist sector accredited by the National Health Service at the "excellence" level)
- Cytogenetics (specialist sector accredited by the National Health Service at the "excellence" level)
- Molecular Genetics (specialist sector accredited by the National Health Service at the "excellence" level)
- Microbiology and Bacteriology
- Allergology and Food Intolerances
- Cytology
- Hormonal Diagnostics and Reproductive Pathophysiology
- Prenatal and Fertility Diagnosis

The BIOAESIS Analysis Laboratory carries out its healthcare activity inside its owned premises located in Via Rocco Scotellaro 1/A in Jesi (AN), a modern and well-equipped facility of approximately 300 m², with the following layout of the rooms:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Public access area** | **Reception/Waiting Room**<br>**Blood Collection Room**<br>**Consultation**<br>**Toilette** |
| **Staff-only area** | **Cytogenetics and Medical Genetics Area**<br>**Production Laboratory Area**<br>**Glassware Washing Room**<br>**Archive and Administration Office**<br>**Toilette**<br>**Staff Changing Room**<br>**Warehouse/Machine Room** |

All rooms are equipped with air-conditioning and air-exchange systems to ensure optimal performance of the instrumentation and greater comfort for both staff and patients.

The facility, located on the ground floor of a recently renovated building compliant with anti-seismic regulations, is free of architectural barriers and is equipped with restrooms for individuals with disabilities.

Adequate signage is installed to indicate the exact location of services and emergency exits; moreover, all staff members wear lab coats/work garments marked with the facility's logo and display their identification badge.

The Laboratory has adopted all safety measures in compliance with Law 81/08.

The laboratory's opening hours are particularly extensive in order to better meet the needs of users.

## Opening hours and access procedures

**Opening hours for users:**
from 7:15 to 13:00 (Monday–Friday) – from 14:00 to 16:00 (Monday–Friday) – from 7:15 to 12:30 (Saturday)
**Information and report collection:**
online 24/7 from the website **www.bioaesis.com**
Monday to Saturday: from 11:30 until closing time (appointments available for collection of printed reports also after 16:00)

**Blood sampling and acceptance of samples for analysis:**
Monday to Saturday, queue ticket at the entrance based on order of arrival, from 7:15 to 10:00

**Genital sampling (Pap test, vaginal and urethral swabs):**
Preferably by appointment on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday until 10:00
* ***Appointment*** Tel.0731-64351 Fax 0731-212895
e-mail: info@bioaesis.com - website: www.bioaesis.com

The **secretarial service** is available to provide information regarding access procedures to the Facility, the tests performed, the total cost of examinations, blood draw times, bookings, and the timing and methods for collecting reports. Please note that telephone booking is not required for blood draws within the indicated hours. A 24/7 messaging/online chat service is available to users directly via Google Maps (by typing "bioaesis") or through major social networks (Facebook, Instagram). The facility has recently been affiliated with CUP24 for booking certain services through the designated platform.

## Acceptance and sampling

**Acceptance of laboratory tests**

Laboratory tests can be carried out on all working days after completing the acceptance procedure.

**Booking of home laboratory tests**

Home laboratory tests can be booked for the following days either by visiting the laboratory, by phone, or by email. For booking, a medical request must be provided or the type of tests must be indicated according to medical instructions.

An appendix is provided with the instructions and guidelines for preparing for sample collection.

**The patient acceptance procedure as follows:**

- Take a ticket and wait your turn in the waiting room, until called by the receptionist via the electronic display.
- Present to the receptionist your health card or an identity document and the prescription for the analyses.
- Make the required payment.
- Wait to be called by the phlebotomist through the progressive acceptance number/ticket.

The applied fees are those indicated in the current regional price list. In order to facilitate the planning of the monthly budget allocated to the facility, patients are kindly requested to contact the Admissions Office to verify which services are provided under the NHS agreement. Users are reminded that analyses included in the regional healthcare price list but not performed internally will be sent to another laboratory indicated in the report. In this case, the service cannot be accepted under an exemption and must be paid for, also with a view to ensuring proper planning and management of the monthly budget.

To carry out private analyses, it is sufficient to indicate to the acceptance staff the tests to be performed. The private-payer price list, attached to this guide, applies. At acceptance, the patient is informed, pursuant to GDPR 679/16, about the processing of sensitive data and is asked to sign the necessary authorizations. Maximum care is always taken by the Laboratory to safeguard patient's privacy; therefore, during venous sampling, patients are called by their progressive acceptance number. Reception staff are always available for any information regarding privacy regulations, which are also displayed and accessible to users in the facility.

## Payment methods

The payment for services is collected at acceptance via cash, credit card or debit card, or bank cheque with immediate issuance of an invoice. For payment of services added after acceptance, or in the case of culture tests with a positive result, payment will be made upon collection of the report, with issuance of an additional invoice or via bank transfer.

## Reports

Reports can be viewed and printed 24/7 on the laboratory's website under the "Report Consultation" section using the credentials (card and password) provided at acceptance. Reports can also be collected directly at the laboratory or dispatched by mail upon request. Collection may be carried out by the patient or by another person, provided they have authorization, their own identity document, and a copy of the patient's identity document.
For collection, the individual must present the payment receipt and identity document.
To request home delivery of reports, this must be requested at acceptance by filling out the envelope with one's address and recording the request in the system.
**N.B.: HIV test reports and genetic test reports must be collected exclusively in person by the patient as required by the Data Protection Authority.**

**Timing**
Report delivery times vary depending on the type of test and are indicated on the receipt provided at acceptance. Most tests are usually delivered to the patient on the same day. In urgent cases, an increased fee applies, and results may be available within a few hours. As tests are completed, partial reports become available online.
**N.B.: viewing/printing or collecting reports within 30 days from the acceptance date is mandatory. Failure to view or collect reports results in payment of the full cost of the service, as per the current NHS price list** (Art. 4 Law 412/91 amended by Law 296/06).

Users are informed that Financial Law no. 412/91 states that citizens who fail to collect the results of visits or diagnostic and laboratory tests must pay the full cost of the service provided. The maximum time limit for collecting reports is 30 days from the scheduled collection date. The 2007 Financial Law (no. 296/2006) confirms the obligation to pay the full amount for services whose report has not been collected, even for exempt patients. Bioaesis Laboratory applies these legal provisions as it is accredited with the National Health Service and in order to safeguard the activity performed, ensuring the proper collection of fees for services rendered to users.

# Exemptions

| CATEGORIES | TICKET AND ESEMPTIONS |
|---|---|
| Patients under 6 years of age and over 65 years of age (family income up to €36.152) | Exempt from payment of services |
| Patients with chronic and disabling conditions (as per Ministerial Decree of 01/02/1991 and subsequent updates)<br>People with malignant neoplastic diseases (cancers)<br>Patients awaiting organ transplantation<br>Civilians with 100% disability (with or without attendance allowance)<br>Civilians with a reduction in working capacity greater than two-thirds (from 67% to 99%)<br>Civilians under 18 years of age with an attendance allowance<br>Blind individuals who are totally blind or with residual vision not exceeding 1/10 in both eyes<br>Deaf individuals (deafness from birth or before language acquisition)<br>War invalids (categories 1 to 5) and individuals deported to concentration camps<br>Severely disabled workers (80% to 100% disability)<br>Workers with a reduction in working capacity greater than two-thirds (from 67% to 79%)<br>Severely disabled individuals due to service-related causes (1st category) and service-related invalids from the 2nd to the 5th category<br>Victims of terrorism, massacres and duty-related events (and their surviving family members)<br>Work-related injuries and occupational diseases<br>Workers with a reduction in working capacity up to two-thirds (from 1% to 66%)<br>War invalids (categories 6 to 8)<br>Service-related invalids (categories 6 to 8) | Exempt from payment of services<br><br>Exemptions for pathology apply only for the specific condition indicated on the prescription by the general practitioner. |
| Social pensioners<br>Minimum pensioners over 60 years of age<br>Unemployed persons | Exempt from payment of services (only if belonging to a household with a total income of less than €8.263,31, increased to €11.362,05 with dependent spouse and an additional €516,46 for each dependent child).<br>Unemployment status is determined by the interruption of a previous employment relationship. Persons awaiting their first job are not considered unemployed. |
| Pregnancy | Exemption from payment for certain services depending on the week of pregnancy (due to lack of space it is not possible to list all types of exemptions; it is recommended to call or contact the Laboratory's reception). |
| All patients who do not fall within the above categories | Payment of the ticket up to a maximum of €36,20 per prescription. |

**Exemption for pathology**

The laboratory applies pathology exemptions as required by current regional regulations.

**Pregnancy exemptions**

The laboratory applies pregnancy exemptions as it is contracted with the NHS.

**List of tests with ticket**

CONTRACTED TESTS – Current Regional Price List, Resolution of the Regional Council no. 275 of 13/01/2015 and subsequent updates. All tests listed in the price list are carried out applying the latest regional pricing schedule.

**List of paid tests**

Please contact the administration office to receive a quotation.

## 5. COMUNICATIONS

We are pleased to announce that, by decree no. 237 dated 29/12/2023 issued by the Head of the Authorization and Accreditation Department of the Marche Region, the Bioaesis laboratory has obtained institutional accreditation at the **EXCELLENT** level, with specialized sectors in Molecular Biology, Cytogenetics, and Medical Genetics. This certifies the extremely high quality of the laboratory medicine services performed. The facility provides more than 200.000 services per year.

Since 30/12/2024, the new price list issued by the Marche Region has been in force, providing reimbursement rates for analysis laboratories that are not financially sustainable.
To ensure the quality of analyses and the additional services that this facility has always provided to its users, we perform tests under the public healthcare agreement only for exempt patients and for those who pay the €36,20 prescription fee, until the allocated monthly budget has been fully utilized.
Services included in prescriptions amounting to less than €36,20 will be provided privately at the same NHS tariff, with the addition of a €5,00 service fee.

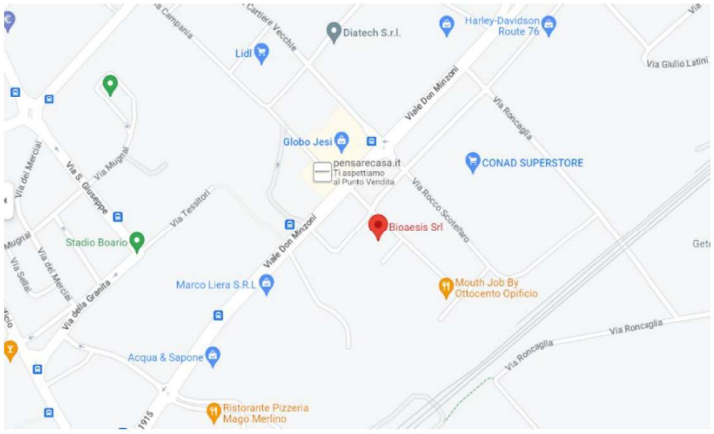
Following the notice received on 11/02/2026, the budget allocated to accredited private clinical laboratories is assigned on a monthly basis. Therefore, with a view to planning the budget allocated to this facility, our administrative office is available to users to verify which services are covered under the National Health Service and which services will require the payment of a €5,00 service fee per access.
Citizens are reminded that they may alternatively turn to public facilities/blood collection points to obtain laboratory services fully or partially covered by the NHS without paying the service fee.
For tests not performed by the laboratory but outsourced to external services, separate payment will be required based on the attached price list and with prior authorization from the user.

Please contact the administration office to receive information about the outsourced tests and their cost.

## 6. CONTACTS

**LABORATORY OF ANALYSIS BIOAESIS SRL**

Via Rocco Scotellato, 1/A - 60035, Jesi (AN)




**Tel. 0731-64351 - Fax 0731-212895**

**e-mail** info@bioaesis.com **–** laboratorio@bioaesis.com **- website** www.bioaesis.com

**Responsible Director:** dr. Daniela Bianchi

# 7. APPENDIX

## Preparation for sample collection

**General rule to follow on the day of BLOOD SAMPLE**

The patient should keep in mind that:

- The trip from home to the Sample Collection Center should be done with minimal physical effort and as little perspiration as possible.
- While waiting, the patient should remain seated calmly, avoiding any agitation or stress, and abstaining from both food and smoking.
- Immediately after the blood draw, do not be in a hurry to leave; a vasovagal response may occur with a delay and cause fainting. If necessary, wait 10 minutes in the waiting room while gently pressing the cotton swab on the puncture site. This will prevent blood leakage and thus bruising and swelling.

**PREPARATION FOR SAMPLE COLLECTION – INSTRUCTIONS**

**VENOUS BLOOD SAMPLE COLLECTION**

Laboratory tests should preferably be performed while fasting, although this is not strictly required for most tests, such as molecular biology assays.

For clinical chemistry tests, diet, alcohol consumption, medications, stress, and fatigue can influence the concentration of certain analytes. These effects may arise even several hours before the blood draw.

**IMPORTANT**: Prolonged fasting should also be avoided; the ideal fasting time is 8 hours, and fasting should NOT exceed 12 hours.

In summary:

- Do not change your eating habits the day before the test.
- Fast for 8–12 hours before the blood draw; avoid coffee, tea, milk, or other beverages (plain water is allowed).
- Avoid intense physical activity in the 12 hours before the test.
- Do not smoke from the moment you wake up until the blood draw.
- Avoid alcohol in the 12 hours before the test.
- Do not take medications in the 12 hours before the test unless medically prescribed or absolutely necessary; in such cases, inform the staff.
- For women: report menstrual status.

### Venous blood sample for Homocystein

The test is affected by the following medications:

- Adenosyl-methionine–containing drugs
- Methotrexate
- Carbamazepine
- Phenytoin
- Anticonvulsants
- Nitric oxide
- 6-azauridine triacetate

### Venous Blood Sample for Bile Acids (Cholalemia)

Two blood samples must be taken: the first one while fasting (at 8:00 AM) and the second one one hour after a high-fat meal consisting of 30 g of milk chocolate plus a glass of whole milk, 10 biscuits, and one egg yolk. Please arrange the timing with the Laboratory.

### Venous Blood Sample for Aldosterone (upright and supine)

The patient must remain available in the Laboratory for 3–4 hours: the first blood sample must be taken after 15 minutes of walking, in an upright position, and the second sample must be taken after 3 hours of rest. In the 3 days prior to the test, consume light meals without adding salt (one teaspoon is allowed in the cooking water for pasta or rice).

### Venous Blood Sample for CEA

Abstain from smoking for 24 hours before the blood draw.

### Venous Blood Sample for Digoxin

Take the medication at the prescribed time. Come for the blood draw 7–24 hours after taking it. Fasting is not required.

### Venous Blood Sample for Antiepileptic Drug Levels

Present for the blood draw before taking the morning dose. Fasting is not required.

### Venous Blood Sample for Lithium

Present before taking the morning dose. Do not change the timing of other doses.

### Venous Blood Sample for Thyroid Hormones

Fasting is not required. No iodinated contrast radiological exams (e.g., cholecystography, urography) in the previous 2 months.

### Venous Blood Sample for Prolactin

The blood sample must be taken in the morning while fasting, after one hour of rest, or alternatively three blood samples may be taken 20 minutes apart with the needle kept in place, while the patient remains at rest.

### Venous Blood Sample for Renin–Angiotensin (upright and supine)

In the 3 days prior to the test, consume light meals without adding salt. The first blood sample must be taken after 15 minutes of walking, in an upright position, and the second one must be taken after 3 hours of rest.

### Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT)

Before performing the oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT), a fasting blood glucose test must have been carried out, preferably no more than one week before the OGTT. If the fasting glucose value does not exceed 110 mg/dL, the test can be performed the following day.

The test has no diagnostic value in conditions that may interfere with the absorption or utilization of glucose (fever, trauma, gastroenteroanastomosis, etc.). On the morning of the test, the patient must arrive at 7:30 AM and remain in the laboratory for 2 hours.

The examination consists of a series of blood draws, the first of which is taken while fasting. The patient is then given approximately 75 g of glucose in 100 ml of solution, followed by the second blood draw after one hour and the third blood draw after an additional hour. The patient must remain at rest and must not consume any food or beverages during the test.

### Venous Blood Sample for Postprandial Glucose

In the three days prior to the test, the patient must follow a high-carbohydrate diet. On the scheduled day, the meal should contain approximately 100 grams of glucose. Exactly two hours after finishing the meal, a venous blood sample is taken to measure blood glucose.

### Venous Blood Sample for Food Intolerance Testing

Peripheral blood; no fasting or appointment required.

**SWABS**

### Vaginal Swab

The swab is performed by appointment. The patient must avoid taking a bath in the tub on the evening before the examination; the test should not be performed during menstruation (bleeding must have stopped for at least three days). The patient must abstain from sexual intercourse in the 24 hours prior to the examination, and must not perform vaginal douches during the 24 hours before the test; on the morning of the examination, the genital area may be washed with water only.

Any antimicrobial or antifungal therapy, both oral and local, must be discontinued for at least six days prior to the examination.

## Female Urethral Swab

The patient must abstain from sexual intercourse in the 24 hours prior to the examination and must avoid urinating in the 3 hours before the test. Any local antibiotic therapy (creams, suppositories, ovules, douches) and systemic antibiotic treatment must be discontinued for one week.

Wait at least 3–4 days after the end of menstruation; do not perform vaginal douches in the 24 hours prior to the examination. After the swab is taken, it is advisable to drink 3–4 glasses of water to stimulate urination. The flushing of the urethra with diluted urine helps eliminate any residual burning sensation.

## Male Urethral Swab

Avoid sexual intercourse in the 24 hours prior to the examination and do not urinate in the 3 hours before the test. Discontinue any antibiotic therapy for one week. In cases where no secretion is evident, the swab should be performed in the morning before urination. After the swab, it is advisable to drink 3–4 glasses of water to stimulate urination. The flushing of the urethra with diluted urine helps eliminate any residual burning sensation.

## Cervical Swab for Chlamydia/Mycoplasma/Neisseria

It is recommended not to undergo the examination while on antibiotic therapy (unless specifically requested by the attending physician). Allow at least one week to pass after the last dose of antibiotics. Discontinue any treatment with vaginal suppositories or ovules at least 48 hours before the test. Do not perform internal vaginal douches in the 24 hours prior to the examination. Avoid sexual intercourse in the 24 hours before the test.

## Pap Test and Full Pap (Pap test + HPV)

The sample is preferably performed by appointment, although walk-in requests are accepted if the midwife is present in the facility. The examination may also be performed during pregnancy if medically indicated. The Pap test should not be carried out during menstruation or in the days immediately following it, as the presence of blood may make microscopic analysis difficult; it is therefore advisable to perform the test around the middle of the menstrual cycle (between days 10 and 20). No specific preparation is required for this examination; however, it is recommended to abstain from sexual intercourse in the 24 hours before the test and to avoid bathtub bathing, internal douching, or the use of vaginal creams, ovules, or suppositories in the 24–48 hours prior to the test. Fasting is not required, and it is not necessary to discontinue any oral or injectable medications.

Always report your age and the date of the first day of your last menstruation.

## Balano-Preputial Sulcus Swab

Antibiotic or antifungal treatments should not be carried out (they must have been discontinued for at least 3–4 days). On the morning of the test, cleanse the genital area using water only.

## Nasal Swab Culture

The patient must not take systemic antibiotics and/or antifungals for at least 7 days before the examination, and must not have used sprays or drops of any kind for 5 days. Do not use facial cleansers.

## Ocular Swab Culture

The patient must not take systemic antifungals and/or antibiotics for at least 7 days before the examination, and must not have used drops or eye drops of any kind for 5 days. Do not use facial cleansers.

## Throat Swab (rapid test/culture) for Group A Beta-Hemolytic Streptococcus

The examination must be performed while fasting (the swab may trigger the gag reflex). The rapid test provides a prompt result (only a few minutes are needed), but has slightly lower sensitivity and specificity compared to the culture test; the traditional culture should be performed before starting any antibiotic therapy. In the 6 hours prior to the test, do not use mouthwashes or local medications. It is also necessary to have completed any antibiotic treatment for at least 5 days, unless otherwise indicated by the attending physician.

## Ear Swab

On the day of the examination, do not clean the ear canal in any way. Any antibiotic or antifungal therapy must be discontinued for at least 5–6 days beforehand.

### Skin Lesion Sample

Do not apply ointments or medications for 12 hours prior

### Sputum Collection

The sputum must be collected in a sterile container (available at our laboratory or purchasable at a pharmacy). In the morning, while fasting, thoroughly clean the oral cavity (if necessary, a saline aerosol may be used before expectoration); take deep breaths and then expectorate after a cough. To be adequate, the sputum must come from the lower airways: if the sample resembles saliva, it must be discarded and a new sample must be obtained. The sample must be delivered to the laboratory immediately, within a maximum of 30 minutes after collection.

**Important**: on the day of collection, the use of mouthwashes must be avoided.

### Semen Collection for Sperm Culture

For the collection, use a sterile container provided by the laboratory (or purchasable at a pharmacy). The sample must be collected by masturbation. In the 3–4 days prior to the examination, abstain from sexual intercourse. It is advisable to drink 3–4 glasses of water to stimulate urination. Urinate abundantly before collection in order to flush the urethra. This flushing allows the detection of the microbial flora present in the semen while avoiding or reducing contamination from the flora residing in the urethra. Ensure thorough local hygiene of the external genital area, wash your hands carefully, and collect the semen in the sterile container. Any urine samples or urethral swabs must be collected at different times (e.g., the day before), after which the semen sample can be collected.

### Semen Collection for Sperm Analysis (Spermiogram)

Required materials: a wide-mouth container, preferably sterile, with a screw cap, available for purchase at a pharmacy.

Instructions: observe a period of sexual abstinence of no fewer than three days and no more than five.

Collection procedure:

- Perform thorough cleansing of the genital area.
- Collect the ejaculate obtained by masturbation directly into the sterile container.
- Make sure the container is tightly closed.
- Label the sample.

Laboratory acceptance hours: by appointment from 7:15 AM to 10:00 AM.

The storage and transport phase is extremely delicate: the sample must be kept and transported at a temperature not lower than 25°C and not higher than 37°C in order not to alter its chemical-physical and biological characteristics. The sample may also be collected at the facility.

It is advisable to repeat the test at least 3 times, 15–30 days apart, as significant variations in some parameters may occur in the same individual.

## URINE SAMPLES

### Urine Collection – Routine Urinalysis

Collect only the first-morning urine, which must be delivered within two hours. Use a clean container free of any residue from other substances. It is preferable to use sterile single-use containers available in pharmacies. Handle the sample carefully during transport. Avoid eating foods rich in mineral salts (cooked vegetables and fruit) on the evening before collection.

For women, wash the genital area before collection; it is recommended to wait until the end of the menstrual cycle

### 24-Hour Urine Collection

Required materials:

- A graduated container with a capacity of at least 2 L
- One conical urine tube

Collection procedure: the collection begins 24 hours before delivering the sample to the Sample Collection Center.

- Discard all urine from the first morning void (around 8:00 AM).
- Collect, in a clean container, all urine passed throughout the day and night, including the urine passed at 8:00 AM the following morning (24 hours after starting the collection).
- Pour all urine after each voiding into the graduated container. This operation must be performed very carefully to avoid losing any amount of urine.
- Throughout the entire collection period, keep the container in a cool place and protected from light.
- At the end of the collection, read the volume indicated on the graduated container and record the total amount of urine collected.
- Mix the entire volume by gently turning the container upside down about ten times to resuspend any sediment.
- Pour approximately 10 mL of the freshly mixed urine into the conical tube and write on it the patient's name and the total 24-hour urine volume. If the transfer is difficult for any reason, label the main container directly.
- Deliver the tube or the container to the Sample Collection Center.

It is very important to measure and record the exact total volume of urine collected over 24 hours, as any error in measurement or transcription would compromise the analytical result and, consequently, the diagnostic and therapeutic assessment. Avoid drinking spirits during the collection period.

For some tests (e.g., creatinine clearance), a blood sample is required on the morning the collection is completed. For other analyses (e.g., microalbuminuria), avoid intense physical exertion or sports activities in the days before the test.

## 24-Hour Urine for Urea/Creatinine Clearance

***Day 1:*** Discard the first morning urine. Collect all urine passed over the following 24 hours in a single container provided by the Laboratory. Keep the container refrigerated during the entire collection period. It is recommended to drink at least two liters of water during the 24 hours.

***Day 2:*** Collect the final urine sample at 8:00 AM (the first urine of the morning) into the 24-hour container. Deliver the sample to the Laboratory by 10:30 AM.

A blood sample must be taken at the beginning or at the end of the urine collection period, after fasting for 6–8 hours.

## 24-Hour Urine for Vanillylmandelic Acid and Catecholamines

***Day 1:*** Discard the first morning urine. Collect all urine passed over the following 24 hours in a single container provided by the Laboratory. Keep the container refrigerated during the entire collection period.

***Day 2:*** Collect the final urine sample at 8:00 AM (the first urine of the morning) into the 24-hour container. Deliver the sample to the Laboratory by 10:30 AM.

In the two days prior to and during the collection, do not consume tea, coffee, bananas, chocolate, or sweets. Discontinue any medications—upon approval of your physician—three days before the collection.

## Urine Collection for Urine Culture

For urine culture, it is necessary to thoroughly clean the external genital area (wash with soap and water and rinse thoroughly with plenty of water). Discard the first portion of urine and collect the midstream urine directly in the appropriate sterile container (available from the Laboratory). Transport the sample carefully, avoiding spills and contamination, and deliver it to the laboratory within one hour of collection to prevent excessive bacterial growth. If antibiotic therapy is in progress, inform the laboratory in advance. The container must be opened only at the moment of collection and closed immediately afterward.

## Chlamydia Testing on Urine

From the first morning urine, collect 15–30 mL in a sterile urine container (the first-morning urine is preferred because it contains a higher concentration of Chlamydia antigen).

The collection must be performed before starting antibiotic therapy; if antibiotic treatment is ongoing, wait at least 5 days after the end of the therapy before collecting the urine sample.

### Urine Cytology

If possible, avoid collecting the first-morning urine: samples obtained from the first urine stream show marked cellular degeneration. It is therefore recommended to collect the sample from the second urination, after some physical activity that facilitates cellular exfoliation. Drink one glass of water every 30 minutes for about an hour and a half, and after washing the genital area, collect the urine (discarding the first stream and filling the container up to the '45' mark).

For a more accurate cytological assessment, the examination should be performed on samples collected over three consecutive days. Under no circumstances should 24-hour urine be used. Deliver the urine sample to the laboratory within a maximum of 2 hours from collection.

## STOOL SAMPLES

### Stool Collection

Collect the sample in an appropriate sterile container, avoiding any contamination with urine. If the samples cannot be delivered within one hour of collection, they must be stored in the refrigerator. Using the small spatula provided inside the container, collect a small amount of stool from three different areas and place the material into the container; isolate any portions that appear suspicious for parasites.

Follow the specific recommendations provided below for the different types of analyses.

### Stool for Parasites

Collect the sample in an appropriate container, avoiding any contamination with urine. The sample must be freshly collected; it is recommended to avoid taking anti-helminthic medications and instead use substances with a mechanical action for at least 10–20 days prior to collection.

### Stool for Microbiota

Collect the sample in an appropriate sterile container, avoiding any contamination with urine. If the sample cannot be delivered within one hour of collection, it must be stored in the refrigerator. Using the spatula provided inside the container, collect a small amount of stool, approximately the size of a walnut.

### Stool Culture / Fungal Culture

Do not use laxatives, purgatives, or suppositories to facilitate evacuation. Use a clean container. Using the special spatula provided inside the container, collect a small amount of stool (a quantity about the size of a walnut is sufficient; the container must not be filled completely). Avoid taking antibiotics for at least 5 days before the test. Using the spatula, collect any watery portions containing pus, blood, and/or mucus, if present. The stool must not be contaminated with urine, nor should it be collected from the toilet bowl. The sample should be collected as soon as possible after the onset of symptoms and delivered to the laboratory immediately.

### Faecal Occult Blood Test

Required materials: sterile container with an integrated spatula (also available at pharmacies)

Collection procedure: this test is generally performed on three samples collected, preferably on three consecutive days, using the appropriate containers and following these recommendations:

- Using the spatula, collect a small amount of stool (about the size of a peanut) if the stool is solid. If the stool is liquid, fill the container only up to half its capacity.
- It is not necessary to follow a meat-free diet.
- Avoid using a toothbrush on the evening before collection.
- Avoid collecting the sample during menstruation or in the presence of bleeding hemorrhoids.
- Deliver the sample to the Sample Collection Center.

Samples may be delivered separately or all together. Before delivery, they may be stored in the refrigerator for up to three days.

### Chemical-Physical Stool Examination

Use an appropriate container, available from our laboratory or purchasable at a medical supply store or pharmacy. Evacuate into a clean receptacle, then collect a small amount of stool (approximately the size of a walnut), taking care not to fill the container completely.