



SPORT  
IRELAND  
ANTI-DOPING

# Sample Collection Procedures - Urine & Blood

A guide to the procedures  
that are followed when  
an athlete is selected to  
undergo a drug test

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# Introduction

Under the National Anti-Doping Programme, Sport Ireland undertakes testing using two methods of detection: **Direct Detection** and **Indirect Detection**.

## **Direct Detection:**

A urine or blood sample is analysed to detect prohibited substances or the use of prohibited methods (such as a blood transfusion). If the threshold of a prohibited substance is exceeded, or any illegal manipulation detected, sanctions are imposed.

## **Indirect Detection:**

The Athlete Biological Passport is an indirect method of detection. The focus is on the effect of prohibited substances/methods on the body. It can now be proved if an athlete has used doping substances or methods by analysing his/her biological parameters and comparing a number of samples over a period of time. Indirect detection can be more effective than direct detection because the effects on the body of using banned substances, as measured through the biological parameters, remain for a lot longer than the period during which it is possible to discover traces of the substances in the body, (i.e. after the substance is no longer in your body, the effect will still be seen on the biological profile).

Both testing approaches follow the same general sample collection procedures as outlined in this leaflet.

# Sample Collection Procedure

## STEP 1: ATHLETE SELECTION

Testing takes place in two situations: in-competition and out-of-competition.

### In-Competition

In-Competition testing takes place at sporting events. Selection can be random, from members of a team/squad or athletes entering a competition. Selection can also be based on criteria such as finish position, jersey numbers, discipline or targeted for a particular reason. Athletes who have not taken part in the competition, e.g. reserves or non-starters, are still subject to doping control.

### Out-of-Competition

Out-of-Competition testing takes place anytime, anywhere, with no advance notice. If you are on a Registered Testing Pool (RTP)\*, you will be required to provide whereabouts information and could be tested at home, at your training location, overseas or other relevant locations. Teams/National Squads are mainly tested at team/squad training sessions but athletes may also be tested at other locations including their homes.

\*The RTP is a pool of athletes who are subject to both in- and out-of-competition testing, who must meet whereabouts and TUE requirements of Sport Ireland. Individual athletes are informed in writing of their inclusion in the RTP.

## STEP 2: ATHLETE NOTIFICATION

A Doping Control Officer (DCO)/Chaperone will notify you if you have been selected for testing - either urine, blood or both. They will explain your rights and responsibilities and ask you to sign the Doping Control Form. You must report immediately to the Doping Control Station (DCS). The DCO/Chaperone will stay at your side at all times until the process is finished.

### Your Rights:

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As an athlete you are entitled to:

- Request to see the DCO and Chaperone's ID card;
- Nominate a representative of your choice to accompany you during the sample collection;
- Request to have an interpreter (if necessary);
- Request a delay in reporting to the DCS for a valid reason.
  - For In-Competition Testing valid reasons include: Participation in a presentation ceremony; Fulfilment of media commitments; Competing in further Competitions; Performing a warm down; Obtaining necessary medical treatment; Locating a representative and/or interpreter; Obtaining photo identification; or Any other reasonable circumstances as determined by the DCO, and which shall be documented.
  - For Out-of-Competition Testing valid reasons include: Locating a representative; Completing a training session; Receiving necessary medical treatment; Obtaining photo identification; Any other reasonable circumstances as determined by the DCO, and which shall be documented.
- Be provided with a choice of sample collection equipment including sample collection vessel and kits;
- Request information regarding the sample collection procedure;
- Request modifications to the sample collection procedure if required, i.e. athletes with impairment;
- Record comments about the sample collection procedure on the Doping Control Form;
- Receive copies of all documentation you have signed.

## STEP 2 CONTD.

### Your Responsibilities:

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It is your responsibility to ensure that:

- You stay within sight of the DCO/Chaperone assigned to you at all times until you have provided your sample and are released by the DCO;
- You comply with the sample collection procedures and that the first sample you provide, after notification, is at the DCS and that you retain control of your urine sample until it is securely sealed. You should avoid excessive re-hydration as there is a requirement to produce a sample with a suitable Specific Gravity for analysis;
- Report immediately for a test unless there is valid reason for a delay (see above);
- You produce identification, when requested, to the DCO/Chaperone;
- All applicable documentation is accurate, complete and signed off;
- You co-operate with the DCOs and Chaperones during the sample collection procedure.
- If you choose to consume food or fluids prior to providing a sample it is at your own risk.

### Medication and Therapeutic Use Exemptions:

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Make sure you take the necessary steps to familiarise yourself with the Irish Anti-Doping Rules. You should tell your doctor or pharmacist that you are an athlete and may be subject to doping control. Make sure you know what medications are permitted in your sport and take responsibility for any substance you ingest. You are ultimately responsible for what is in your body. You must understand that any products, such as dietary or herbal supplements, are taken at your own risk and that Sport Ireland strongly advises you not to take supplements at all. Familiarise yourself with the procedures for Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs) and determine whether or not you need to apply for a TUE. TUEs are your responsibility.

## STEP 3: SAMPLE COLLECTION

One or more urine and/or blood samples will be collected from you. Testing abroad follows the same process; if you have any concerns with the process record it on the Doping Control Form.

### Urine

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- When you are ready to provide a sample, you will be required to put on gloves.
- Select a sealed Sample Collection Vessel, from a choice of vessels, and check that seals are intact and it has not been tampered with.
- Proceed to the toilet area with the DCO/Chaperone of the same gender.
- The DCO/Chaperone must witness the sample leave your body and enter the vessel with a clear and unobstructed view. You must ensure that the Sample Collection Vessel remains in the sight of the DCO/Chaperone while you provide your sample. You will be asked to adjust clothing so that mid-chest to knees and up to elbows are visible; if necessary, you may need to adjust your position so that a clear view is possible.
- Only you the athlete should handle the sample until it is securely sealed.
- The DCO will check the volume of urine provided. If it is not a sufficient volume of urine to meet laboratory requirements (90mls), you will be required to proceed with the Partial Sample Procedure.
- Under 18 - Your representative may be present in the toilet area to witness the actions of the DCO/Chaperone; if as an Under 18 athlete you would prefer not to use your own representative, you can liaise with the DCO/Chaperone to organise another appropriate person to witness the actions of the DCO/Chaperone.
- If you are an athlete with an impairment who requires assistance in the toilet area, your representative can assist you.
- Following provision of the sample, you will be required to choose a kit containing a pair of bottles marked A and B; check that seals are intact, it has not been tampered with and sample code numbers match. This sample code number is recorded on the Doping Control Form. You will divide the sample between the A and B bottles. You will be asked to tightly seal the two bottles with their lids.
- A few drops of urine should be left in the Sample Collection Vessel to allow the DCO to check the specific gravity of the sample. If the reading is outside of laboratory requirements, you may be requested to provide another sample.

## STEP 3 CONTD.

### Partial Sample Procedure (<90mls)

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If you provide an insufficient volume of urine on the first attempt, the first partial sample will be sealed and secured using partial sample equipment, and should remain in your possession (or with the DCO) until further samples are provided. The Chaperone/DCO will remain with you at all times.

### Blood

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- Select the blood collection equipment (vacutainer test tubes, needles, blood transport kit etc) from a choice of kits available; check that seals are intact, it has not been tampered with and sample code numbers match.
- A certified and experienced phlebotomist, Blood Collection Officer (BCO), will label all test tubes before blood is collected.
- Normally two to four tubes of blood are collected, each containing 3-5mls. The volume of blood collected for the purposes of doping control would not have an impact on your performance.
- You will be asked to remain seated for at least 10 minutes before undergoing Venipuncture. (In some cases, depending on the test, you may have to wait for 2 hours post-exercise to provide a sample).
- The BCO makes every possible effort to make the collection of blood samples as easy and painless as possible for you; however, if you are prone to fainting when giving blood, or should the sight of blood make you nervous, afraid, and/or nauseous, inform the BCO and DCO of your concerns.

#### ***The Blood Collection Officer (BCO) will:***

- Ask for your non-dominant arm, apply a tourniquet (a constricting or compressing device used to control venous and arterial circulation to an extremity for a period of time) to the upper arm, and clean the skin at the puncture site.
- Draws blood and fill each vacutainer blood test tube with the required volume of blood.
- Place the vacutainer test tubes into the A and B transport containers.
- The BCO will instruct you on how to tightly seal the transport containers for secure transport to the lab.

## STEP 3 CONTD.

### Recording and Certification of the Information

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You should declare any medications and/or supplements taken during the past 7 days on the Doping Control Form.

For blood testing, you will be required to declare information regarding recent blood transfusions, time spent at altitude, blood loss and altitude simulation training. Record any comments about the doping control session on the Doping Control Form. You and your representative (if applicable) should check that all information on the Doping Control Form is complete and accurate. You, your representative (if applicable) and the DCO sign off on the form, and you are given a copy of the form and then free to leave the Doping Control Station.

## STEP 4: SAMPLE ANALYSIS

Samples are sent to a WADA accredited laboratory for analysis. The laboratory receives a copy of the Doping Control Form that reveals none of your personal details. On arrival at a WADA accredited laboratory, the A sample is opened and analysed and the B sample is securely stored. On receipt of the samples, laboratory staff complete checks on the integrity of the sample (signs of tampering, correlation between sample code numbers on forms and those on the bottles) before proceeding with the analysis of the sample.



## STEP 5: RESULTS MANAGEMENT

The laboratory sends the result to Sport Ireland who will then forward the result to your National Governing Body (NGB). It is the responsibility of your NGB to notify you of the result in writing. If you have not received your result from your NGB within 6 weeks of the sample collection, please contact your NGB for the result. A copy of the result is sent to WADA, by the laboratory, to ensure accountability in the process. In the case of an adverse analytical finding, you will be contacted directly by Sport Ireland.

In the case of blood samples collected for the purpose of the Athlete Biological Passport (ABP) you will not receive results as the analysis contributes to the 'indirect detection' process. In this case, your NGB will be notified that a sample has been collected and will be added to your ABP. The outcome of the analysis (i.e. the measures recorded for your ABP) will only be available upon request to Sport Ireland.

# Stand Up for Clean Sport

Sport Ireland is dedicated to creating a clean, safe, and drug free sporting environment with a level playing field for all. We realise however that we cannot achieve this without the assistance of athletes, support personnel and others who are similarly committed. If you have information or concerns regarding doping Sport Ireland wants to hear it.

Your concerns may be anonymously and securely communicated through the reporting section of the Sport Ireland website (<http://www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping/report-doping>). However should you wish to speak with a staff member you may provide your contact details or alternatively you may contact the Sport Ireland Anti-Doping Unit Intelligence and Investigations Officer.

We know that speaking up is a big decision and one which is not easily made. In this regard your personal details and the information you provide will be treated with the strictest confidence. Your identity will never be disclosed without your permission, and no action will be taken which might compromise you in any way.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What if I refuse to be tested?

Although you are entitled to refuse to provide a sample please bear in mind that a refusal is likely to be treated as a doping violation by your National Governing Body and/or Sport Ireland. The DCO/Chaperone will advise you of the consequences of failing to comply with sample collection procedures. The sanction for refusal is a period of ineligibility of up to 4 years from sport. In accordance with the Irish Anti-Doping Rules, “No Athlete or other Person who has been declared Ineligible may, during the period of Ineligibility, participate in any capacity in a Competition or activity (other than authorised anti-doping education or rehabilitation programs) authorised or organised by any Signatory, Signatory’s member organisation, or a club or other member organisation of a Signatory’s member organisation, or by any National Governing Body or by a member or affiliate organisation or licensee of a National Governing Body or in Competitions authorised or organised by any professional league or any international or national-level Event organisation or any elite or national-level sporting activity funded by a governmental agency”.

**For more information on sanctions, read the Irish Anti-Doping Rules on [www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping](http://www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping)**

## Will an athlete under the age of 18 be tested?

The decision to test athletes is not based on age; it is based on the level that the athlete is competing at as well as sport-specific factors. When an U18 athlete is providing a sample they have the right to request their representative to be present in the toilet area - the representative will not witness the passing of the sample but are present to watch the actions of the Chaperone/DCO who is witnessing the sample. The athletes’ consent is required before their representative may enter the toilet area. If the athlete does not wish to bring their representative, the Chaperone/DCO will liaise with the athlete to arrange another representative in the toilet area.

**For more FAQs in relation to the Sport Ireland testing programme, check out [www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping](http://www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping)**

# Learn More

## Further Resources for learning about the Sample Collection Procedures

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- See [www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping/education-zone/education-zone/what-happens-in-a-drug-test](http://www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping/education-zone/education-zone/what-happens-in-a-drug-test) for FAQ's on urine and blood tests
- Check out Sport Ireland eLearning platform on [www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping/education-zone/education-zone/sport-ireland-anti-doping-elearning](http://www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping/education-zone/education-zone/sport-ireland-anti-doping-elearning)
- Check your International Federation Website (if applicable) for more resources
- The International Standards for Testing and Investigations are available on [www.wada-ama.org](http://www.wada-ama.org) with detailed information on undertaking a testing programme
- See <https://www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping/report-doping> if you want any more information on how to report doping.

## Learn more about Anti-Doping

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Check out [www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping](http://www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping) for comprehensive information on all aspects of the Irish Anti-Doping Programme.



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Sport Ireland, The Courtyard, Sport Ireland Campus  
Snugborough Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, D15 PN0N  
Tel: +353 1 860 8800 Fax: +353 1 860 8860  
Email: [antidoping@sportireland.ie](mailto:antidoping@sportireland.ie)

[www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping](http://www.sportireland.ie/anti-doping)