

Pregnancy Testing Before Your Surgery

On the day of your surgery, you may be asked to give a urine (pee) sample for pregnancy testing.

Why do I need a pregnancy test before my surgery?

It is important for you and your health care team to know if you are pregnant before you have surgery. Some surgical procedures can put you and/or your baby at risk. We want to make sure you receive the safest care possible.

Who will be offered a pregnancy test?

A nurse will offer you a pregnancy test before your surgery if:

- › You have a uterus (womb) and at least one ovary (an organ that makes, stores, and releases eggs).
- › You have had at least one menstrual cycle (period).
- › You are sexually active with a partner who produces sperm.
- › You are not in menopause or have not already gone through it.
- › You have not had a hysterectomy (surgery to remove the uterus).

What will happen if I choose not to have a pregnancy test?

- You have the right to choose not to have a pregnancy test before your surgery.
- If you choose not to have a pregnancy test, your health care team will make sure your surgical procedure can still be done safely.

How do I get ready for the pregnancy test?

- Since you are not allowed to drink fluids before your surgery, it may be hard to give a urine sample. If your surgery is scheduled for early in the morning, wait to urinate (pee) until you get to the pre-op area and have been asked to give the urine sample, if possible.
- If your surgery is scheduled for later in the day, you can urinate in the morning, if needed. If you cannot urinate at this time, we may be able to do a blood test for pregnancy (in some cases).

How is the pregnancy test done?

Before you go to the operating room (OR), a nurse will give you instructions on how to collect the urine sample.

What will happen after the test?

- If your pregnancy test is **negative**, a member of your health care team will tell you.
- If your pregnancy test is **positive**, a surgeon and/or anesthesiologist (doctor who gives you medication to put you to sleep for surgery) will tell you privately. We understand that you may not be expecting a positive result and we will help you decide what to do next about your surgery.
- Rarely, the result may be **unclear**. If this happens, you will be asked to give a second urine sample, or a blood test will be given (in some cases).
- Your pregnancy test result will be recorded in your health record. This is a Nova Scotia Health policy.

**What are your questions?
Please ask. We are here to help you.**

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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