

# Fasting For a Blood Test

## *For how long do I need to fast?*

You should fast for a period of **at least EIGHT (8) -TWELVE (12) hours** prior to collecting your sample. Longer periods of fasting are acceptable. This is usually done overnight with the collection in the morning to cause you the least disruption to your day. If you work evening / night shifts please ask our staff as we can make other arrangements to suit.

## *What can I have and what can't I have?*

You will usually be asked to stop eating all solid foods and all fluids containing foods (eg orange juice, milkshakes etc) or sugar (cordials, juices, milky hot drinks etc). **This effectively means you can only have water whilst fasting for a blood test.** We encourage you to drink plenty of water prior to your test.

## *Important Warnings*

**FOR ALL PATIENTS:** Unless you have been specifically instructed to do so you should keep taking ALL your medications at the appropriate time. If you take your medication by mouth as pills or powder you can swallow your medicine with a cup of water. If your medicine is liquid you can still take it. Injections are not affected.

**FOR DIABETICS:** Fasting for this length of time may lead to symptoms of a hypoglycaemic episode (hypo). If this occurs stop your fast immediately and treat yourself for a hypo as you have been previously taught. **DO NOT** attempt to complete the fast as this could be dangerous. Please advise your treating doctor (i.e. the one who asked you to have this test) that you cannot fast for the test and he/she will make alternative arrangements with you.

## *Why do we need to do this?*

Some things are affected by the last time you have eaten and we try to exclude the effects of food and drinks by asking you to fast first. This means that the measurement reflects your baseline or lowest possible level for that substance rather than reflecting the food/drink you had in your last meal. This gives us a more reliable result to assist your doctor in investigating or managing your problem(s).

For further information please contact one of the collection centres listed overleaf.

Phone 02 5124 2932 Fax 02 5124 2815  
actpathology@act.gov.au  
www.health.act.gov.au/services/act-pathology  
Gilmore Crescent Garran ACT 2605 PO Box 11 Woden ACT 2606



**ACT Pathology Collection Centres**

- The Canberra Hospital - Ph 5124 2816  
Mon - Fri 7.30- 5.30  
Saturday 8.30 - 12.15
- University of Canberra Hospital - Ph 5124 0230  
Mon - Fri 8.00- 4.15
- Gungahlin Health Centre - Ph 5124 1135  
Mon - Fri 7.30- 4.30  
Saturday 8.30 – 12.30 (not open long weekends)
- Tuggeranong Health Centre - Ph 5124 1352  
Mon - Fri 8.00- 5.00  
Saturday 8:30-12:00 (not open long weekends)
- Belconnen Health Centre-Ph 5124 1502  
Mon-Fri 8.00-5.00

Phone 02 5124 2932 Fax 02 5124 2815  
actpathology@act.gov.au  
www.health.act.gov.au/services/act-pathology  
Gilmore Crescent Garran ACT 2605 PO Box 11 Woden ACT 2606

