

Visiting the Lab

Commonly Asked Questions

Your Physician or Nurse Practitioner may have asked you to visit a lab to provide a sample for the purposes of testing. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions when it comes to visiting the lab as a patient in Burnaby.

1. What does the lab do?

The lab tests blood, urine and body fluid samples.

2. I have a lab requisition form from my doctor. Where can I go to get my lab work done?

You can visit a LifeLabs location, or any FHA hospital outpatient lab to get your tests done. You may be required to book an appointment before you visit certain lab locations — details can be found on the LifeLabs online location finder* and the FHA website*. Walk-ins may be accepted in some locations, but booking an appointment is recommended to reduce your waiting time.

3. How do I book a lab appointment?

For LifeLabs, you can book an appointment online at LifeLabs.com by setting up an account. If you are unable to book online, please call the Client Information Centre at 604-431-7206 for an appointment. LifeLabs recommends setting up an appointment, but at certain locations, if you need a same day appointment, walk-ins are accepted. Be sure to check in advance* about whether your preferred LifeLabs location accepts walk-in appointments.

For a FHA outpatient lab, you can book an appointment on the FHA laboratory service page*. Please note that you need to create an account to use the online booking system. If you are unable to book the appointment online, please call 1-888-442-5227. Walk-ins may be accepted in some locations, but booking an appointment is recommended to reduce your waiting time.

4. Why do labs take more than one blood sample?

Different tests have different requirements, and so more than one type of blood sample may be needed. Please note it is not harmful when multiple samples of blood are drawn; labs rarely need more than two tablespoons (30mL) of blood.

5. Why can't multiple family members get their lab work done at the same appointment?

Labs can only help one patient per appointment, otherwise the process can be very time consuming and challenging for the lab staff. For more than one patient, separate appointments are needed.

6. What do I need for my blood work to be covered under Medical Services Plan (MSP)?

For you to have your blood tested, you need to bring with you the requisition form from your doctor, your Care Card or your BC ID card. The doctor needs to indicate "MSP billable" on the requisition form. MSP coverage depends on the type of test, your specific diagnoses, and follow-up guidelines. See Question 15 for examples of tests that MSP does not cover.

7. What do I do if I need an urgent, same day appointment?

If you can't get a same-day appointment, you can go to a LifeLabs walk-in, out-patient lab service centre.* Some hospitals also accept walk-ins during specific times, for example Burnaby Hospital Lab* and Royal Columbian Hospital Lab*. In an urgent situation, we recommend that you go to a hospital's Emergency Department.

Please note that same-day testing does not always mean same-day results, as some tests may take longer to process.

8. How can I access my results? Do I get my lab results at the same time as my doctor?

If you have gone to a lab in the Lower Mainland and you are at least 16 years old, you can view your results on MyCareCompass at the same time as your doctor. On MyCareCompass*, you can see your test results (including Holter results), book appointments, and much more.

9. Who will talk to me about my lab results?

You can talk to your doctor to better understand your test results. If you receive a critical lab result requiring urgent care, your doctor or the lab will contact you promptly.

If you would like to talk to your doctor about routine monitoring test results, please book an appointment with them to take place about a week after blood is drawn.

10. How often can a doctor order the same test?

There are strict clinical guidelines set by the province on how often tests should be done. There is no risk in over-testing, but it may be unnecessary and costly.

11. Can I access the results of my family members?

What about my children's lab results?

MyCareCompass* can be used by patients aged 16 years and older. If you are 19 years old or older, you must access your own records for privacy reasons. If you are having trouble accessing your lab results, please book an appointment with your doctor to review your results together.

If your child is under 16 years, results cannot be accessed on MyCareCompass. You should get your children's lab results from the doctor. Alternatively, you may phone the lab to ask for a form to fill out that formally requests for the lab results.

12. How long does it take for a doctor to get lab tests back?

Generally, after testing your doctor will have your results within 1-2 days. However, some tests are done less frequently or may be completed at another lab, and so it can take a longer time to get lab results. Please note that fungal testing can take up to 30 days to be reported.

13. What medications should I avoid before a test?

Should I avoid a certain food or drink?

This will vary depending on the test. Your doctor will advise you on how to prepare for your lab test. A LifeLabs provides a list of how you can prepare for specific tests.*

14. Do you need a doctor's referral for private pay testing?

Private pay, or self-pay, are for tests that are not paid for by a medical plan. You still require a doctor's requisition form because the lab must provide the doctor with the results.

15. In an outpatient setting, what tests would I have to pay for?

Please ask your doctor or your lab for the cost of outpatient tests that are not covered by MSP. Some examples of outpatient tests that you may need to pay for include prenatal genetic testing, fecal calprotectin, human papillomavirus, and tests that do not meet MSP guidelines like Vitamin D or PSA.

For tests not covered by MSP, your doctor can submit a MSP funding application to the BC lab agency for review. If approved, the fee will be covered. However, please note that in these situations, the lab will collect the sample only when the requisition is accompanied by an approval letter from the BC lab agency.

16. Does LifeLabs have a mobile lab service?

Yes, LifeLabs provides a free mobile lab service* to patients with mobility challenges in care facilities and their private homes. This must be arranged by your doctor.

DEFINITIONS

Appointment

When you arrange in advance a date and time to visit

BC ID Card or Care Card

An official government-issued identity card with your PHN used to access health services

Doctor

Your doctor or nurse practitioner who ordered the lab tests

FHA

Fraser Health Authority

MSP

Medical Services Plan

Outpatient

Medical care received at a hospital, without being admitted (formally staying overnight)

PHN

Personal Health Number

Walk-in

When you can access services without booking an appointment in advance

SAMPLE DOCUMENTS

Requisition Form
("Referral") example



OUTPATIENT LABORATORY REQUISITION
Please present your Care Card with each Visit

Highlighted fields must be completed to avoid change in specimen collection and patient processing. For tests indicated with a shaded box, consult provincial guidelines and protocols (www.BC.LabServices.ca)

PHYSICIAN: PHYSICIAN, LICENSED, MSP PRACTITIONER NUMBER

MR/MS/MI: MSP NON-MSP HMO/ABC PATIENT OTHER

PHYSICIAN SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

FOR PHYSICIAN: _____

FOR PATIENT: _____

DOB: YYYY MM DD SEX: M F Pregnant? YES NO Fasting? _____ h:m

TELEPHONE NUMBER OF PATIENT: _____ CHART NUMBER: _____

ADDRESS OF PATIENT: _____ CITY/TOWN: _____ PROVINCE: _____

DIAGNOSIS: _____ CURRENT MEDICATIONS/DATE AND TIME OF LAST DOSE: _____

HEMATOLOGY: Hematology profile F/AB Panels (as per lab definition) On request?

URINE TESTS: Urine culture: for culture only

CHEMISTRY: Glucose: fasting (see request for patient instructions) Glucose: non-fasting GGT: postprandial (diabetes screen 10g food, 1 hour post food)



Care Card/BC ID Card example

FIND LINKED RESOURCES

Scan the QR code or visit burnabypcn.ca/visiting-the-lab-faqs to find additional links to health resources

