

Your Blood Draw Experience



This booklet will take you through the
blood drawing process.

We want to ensure that you receive the highest level of healthcare. This means keeping you educated and informed about what is involved in the different stages of a blood draw. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your doctor or medical technician.

Understanding Blood Tests



Blood tests are a simple, important way to measure the health of your body. Your doctor can use the results to assess your organs, diagnose conditions/diseases such as diabetes and heart disease and monitor treatments for those conditions/diseases. A phlebotomist is the medical professional who draws blood from patients for testing, donation, or transfusion purposes.

Preparing for the Blood Draw

Some tests require that you don't eat or drink anything other than water prior; therefore the best time to do such tests is first thing in the morning. Others do not require you to fast at all.

Even if fasting is not required, the following is advisable.

- Drink plenty of water before your appointment – your blood volume goes up when you are hydrated, and your veins are plumper and easier to access.
- Wear a short-sleeved shirt or layers to make it easier to access your veins.
- Stop taking aspirin at least two days before your blood draw. If you plan to donate blood, please speak with your doctor to confirm if/when you should discontinue any medication such as aspirin.



The Blood Draw

The time it takes for a blood draw usually depends upon the amount of blood needed. This can range from a few minutes for a blood sample to an hour for blood donation. This is what to expect during a blood draw.

- **Step 1**

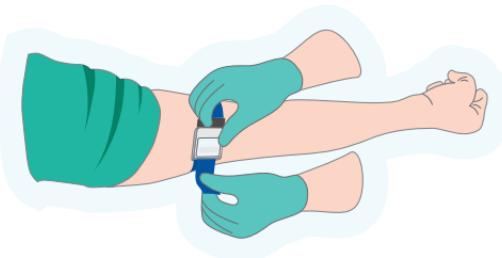
When you arrive at Health City, you will check in at Reception.

- **Step 2**

A member of the Health City team will escort you to the Phlebotomy Room.

- **Step 3**

The phlebotomist will ask you to expose one arm, and then place a tight elastic band known as a tourniquet around that limb. This makes the veins back up with blood and easier to identify. Please inform the phlebotomist if you have a preference regarding where the blood is drawn from. This could be your non-dominant arm or an area where you know a person taking your blood has had success before.



- **Step 4**

The phlebotomist will identify a vein that appears easy to access, specifically a large, visible vein. They may feel the vein to assess the size and borders.

- **Step 5**

The area will be cleaned with an alcohol pad or other cleansing method. While the phlebotomist will look for the most viable vein, it's possible they may have difficulty accessing the vein when they insert the needle. If this is the case, they may need to try another vein.

- **Step 6**

A needle will be inserted into your skin to access the vein. The needle is usually connected to special tubing or a syringe to collect blood.

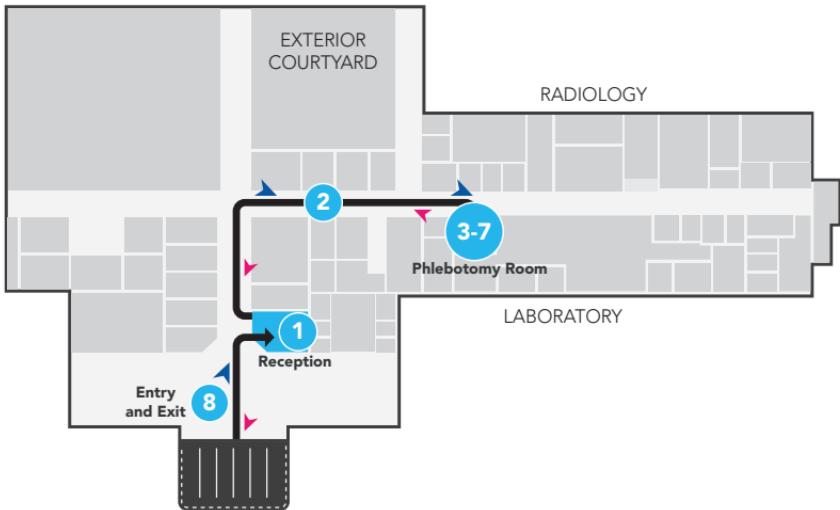
- **Step 7**

Once the blood has been collected, the tourniquet will be released and the needle removed from your arm. A gauze or bandage will be placed at the puncture site; applying gentle pressure will prevent further bleeding. After a short while, the phlebotomist will likely cover the puncture site with a bandage.

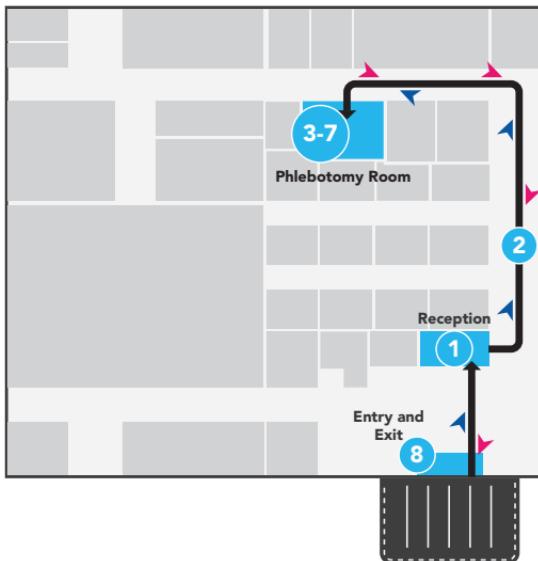
- **Step 8**

You may leave the department/hospital.

HEALTH CITY EAST END



HEALTH CITY AT CAMANA BAY



SOME COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT A BLOOD DRAW



Q: What are the side effects of a blood draw?

A: Most blood draws cause minimal side effects. However, it's possible you could experience some of the following:

- **Bleeding:** Refrain from doing any vigorous exercise, which could stimulate blood flow and may cause bleeding from the site.
- **Bruising and soreness:** Apply a cloth-covered ice pack to your arm or hand if you have soreness or bruising at the puncture site.
- **Light-headedness (especially after donating blood):** Snack on energy-boosting foods, such as cheese and crackers and a handful of nuts, or half of a turkey sandwich.

- **Feeling Lightheaded:** You can also eat foods rich in iron, such as leafy green vegetables or iron-fortified cereals to help replenish lost iron stores to build your blood supply back up.
- **Skin irritation from tape or adhesive from an applied bandage:** Remove the bandage after your blood has clotted.

Most of these will subside with time. However, if you do experience any symptoms that appear abnormal, call your doctor or the location that did your blood draw.

Q: What should I do if I am nervous before and during the blood draw?

A: It's normal to feel nervous before a blood draw. Inform the person taking your blood and they will help you get through the process as comfortably as possible. You may be advised to look away or take a deep breath in when the needle is inserted.

- Focus on taking deep, full breaths before getting a blood draw. This will help to calm you.
- Take headphones with you and listen to music before and during the draw.
- Ask if there are devices or local anaesthetics such as a small vibrating tool or numbing cream, especially for children.

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