



Urine Collection with Cotton Balls List of Acceptable & Unacceptable Tests

When collecting urine using a cotton ball, it is important to remember that not all tests may be performed. Table I summarizes the tests that the laboratory can perform, accurately. Table II summarizes the tests that cannot be performed and the reason for why the specimen will be rejected. If the test is not listed here, please contact the laboratory for more information.

TABLE I: ACCEPTABLE TESTS	
CHEMISTRY	
Chloride, Urine	
Creatinine, Urine	
Glucose, Urine	
Potassium, Urine	
Sodium, Urine	
Urea Nitrogen, Urine	
TOXICOLOGY	
Drugs of Abuse, Urine	

TABLE II: UNACCEPTABLE TESTS	
URINE ANALYTES	REASON FOR REJECTION
CHEMISTRY	
Albumin, Urine	Cotton balls decrease the concentration, possibly by binding the proteins.
Calcium, Urine	Cotton balls increase the concentration due to being treated with chemical containing calcium.
Magnesium, Urine	Effect unknown.
Phosphorous, Urine	Cotton balls increase the concentration due to being treated with chemical containing phosphorus.
Protein, Micro-Total, Urine	Cotton balls decrease the concentration, possibly by binding the proteins.
Uric Acid, Urine	Effect unknown.
URINALYSIS	
Urinalysis, Urine	Cotton balls may remove cellular elements and bacteria leading to inaccurate urine microscopic and dipstick results. Fibers from cotton balls will likely interfere with microscopic exam.
MICROBIOLOGY	
Culture, Urine	Cotton balls are not sterile and may remove bacteria, leading to inaccurate bacterial count and isolates.