

**New Smyrna Wellness Center**  
**502 Palmetto Street New Smyrna Beach FL, 32168**

**Patient Instructions for Fasting Specimens**

**Purpose**

Drawing instructions are intended to help you draw the correct specimen for the test your clinician has requested. First read instructions carefully, you may be required to fast before having a blood test. This is because certain test values change following the digestion of food. The measurement of blood sugar (glucose) and some blood lipids (fats and cholesterol) are common examples.

**Instructions**

- If you are asked to fast for your test:
  - Do not eat or drink anything (except water) for 8 hours before you go to the laboratory to have your blood drawn. If your physician has ordered lipid tests, you must fast for at least 12 hours. This usually means from 8 p.m. the previous evening. You may drink water, but no juice, tea, coffee or alcohol.
  - Do not smoke, chew gum, or exercise. These activities may stimulate the digestive system and alter test results. After the specimen is drawn, you may resume your normal diet.
- May I drink water? Yes, you can drink water but no other kinds of drinks.
- Should I continue to take my medications? Yes, unless your doctor tells you not to.
- May I drink juice? No, just water.
- May I drink coffee? No, not even black without sugar, and the same goes for tea. You can drink water.
- May I chew gum? No, not even sugarless. Gum stimulates your digestive system and can alter test results.
- May I smoke? No, smoking can affect test results.
- May I do my exercise routine? No, exercise can also affect test results.
- What time should I come to the laboratory? Most people find it convenient to stop eating and drinking after 8 p.m. and to arrive at the Outpatient Registration Area early the next morning.

**If you don't know if you're supposed to fast or not just go ahead and fast,**

**But please drink plenty of water.**

# Which Blood Tests Require Fasting

Here are a few of the most common blood tests that require fasting:

- **Blood Glucose Test.** This blood test measures our blood sugar levels. Fasting time: 8 to 10 hours.
- **Gamma Glutamyl Transferase (GGT).** This test measures the GGT enzyme and liver health. Fasting time: 8 to 10 hours.
- **Glucose Tolerance Test.** This test evaluates blood sugar levels. Fasting time: 8 to 12 hours.
- **Liver Function Test.** This test gathers information about the enzymes and nutrients in the liver. Fasting time: 8 to 12 hours.
- **Renal Function Test.** This blood test assesses kidney functioning and the body's ability to dispose of its waste. Fasting time: 8 to 12 hours.
- **Vitamin B12 Test.** This test evaluates whether people are deficient in vitamin B12 or not and its impacts. Fasting time: 8 to 12 hours.
- **Lactose Tolerance Test.** This test determines if people can tolerate and consume dairy products. Fasting time: 8 to 12 hours.

While most tests ask for patients to fast for 8 to 10 hours, there are a few that require 12 hours of fasting, including the following:

- **Lipid Profile.** This blood test assesses the amount of cholesterol and triglycerides in our blood. Fasting time: 12 hours.
- **Thyroid Function Test.** This test measures thyroid hormones, which are heavily impacted by our diet. Fasting time: 12 hours.
- **Iron Test.** This test analyzes one's iron levels, particularly to diagnose people with anemia. Fasting time: 12 hours.