OSCE checklist for urine specimen collection

An OSCE checklist for urine specimen collection covers checking the request, choosing the right type of sample, teaching a clean midstream catch or taking a catheter sample from the port aseptically, labelling at the bedside and sending it with the form.

OSCE checklist for urine specimen collection: steps to practise

1. Check the request for the right patient and which sample is needed, such as a midstream or a catheter sample, and the test wanted.
2. Wash your hands, introduce yourself, confirm identity (name, date of birth and wristband), explain why the sample is needed and gain consent.
3. Ask about any antibiotics already started, as the laboratory needs to know, and offer privacy.
4. Collect a sterile container, labels, a request form, gloves, an apron and the items your policy uses for cleaning.
5. For a midstream sample, ask the patient to wash their hands and clean the genital area as your policy says, wiping from front to back for women.
6. Ask the patient to pass the first part of the urine into the toilet, then collect the middle part in the container without touching the inside or the lid, and finish in the toilet.
7. For a catheter sample, wash your hands and put on gloves. If there is no urine in the tubing, clamp the tubing below the sampling port only for a short time and as your policy allows.
8. Clean the needle-free sampling port and let it dry, take the sample from the port with a sterile syringe using aseptic technique, and put it into the sterile container. Never take it from the drainage bag.
9. Remove any clamp straight away so the catheter drains freely.
10. Close the container firmly, remove gloves and wash your hands.
11. Label the container at the bedside with the patient's details, date, time and type of sample, and complete the request form.
12. Send the sample promptly or store it as your policy says. Record that it was sent and note the colour, smell and any blood, and report concerns such as blood in the urine or signs of sepsis to

the nurse in charge.

What candidates commonly forget

- Taking a catheter sample from the bag
- Forgetting to remove the clamp
- Touching the inside of the container
- Not labelling at the bedside
- Not noting the time or antibiotics on the form
- Sending it late without storing it correctly

Local policy comes first

This is our own practice checklist. Your college, hospital or country may do some steps differently. Where local policy and this list disagree, follow local policy.

Practise the hands-on steps with a classmate or in a skills lab, because an AI patient cannot watch your technique. You can practise the talking part with an AI patient, and try one station free with no sign-up. Next, try Collecting a catheter specimen. Back to the medical surgical nursing OSCE page: medical surgical nursing OSCE, or see the full OSCE checklist list.

Common questions

What is the OSCE checklist for urine specimen collection?

Check the request, wash hands, confirm identity and consent, teach midstream collection or sample aseptically from the catheter port, close and label at the bedside, complete the form, send promptly and record.

Why a midstream sample?

The first part of the stream washes away germs from the urethra, so the middle part gives a cleaner sample.

Why not take a catheter sample from the bag?

Urine in the bag may have been there for hours and is more likely to be contaminated. Use the sampling port with aseptic technique.

Sources

- NICE CG139: infection prevention and control
- NHS: urinary catheters

Checked 2026-11-13. Fees and rules change, so confirm them with the regulator before you book.