

Collecting Salivary TNF-Alpha

Sample Collection Method Overview

✓ Passive Drool

+ Special Considerations

TNF-Alpha levels in oral fluid are often very low and levels do not correlate with levels in serum in healthy donors. TNF-alpha levels in saliva most often will represent a degree of inflammation in the oral mucosal immune compartment. Soluble receptors for TNF-alpha are also present in oral fluid.

Antibodies to TNF-alpha are employed in some medications and the use of those medications has the potential to influence the level of TNF-alpha measured in saliva.

+ Sample Collection (General Procedure)

Before Sample Collection

- Avoid foods with high sugar or acidity immediately before sample collection, since they may compromise the assay by lowering saliva pH and increasing bacterial growth.
- Document consumption of alcohol, nicotine, and prescription/over-the-counter medications within the prior 12 hours.
- Document the presence of oral diseases or injury.
- Consider documenting parameters to estimate saliva flow rate.
- Rinse mouth with water to remove food residue and **wait at least 10 minutes** after rinsing to avoid sample dilution before collecting saliva.

During Sample Collection

- **Recommended Collection Volume: 425 µl***
- Follow desired sample collection device protocol.

*Add 300 µl to the total volume of all tests for liquid handling loss

After Sample Collection

- Record the time and date of specimen collection.
- Refrigerate samples immediately (if possible) and freeze at or below -20°C (household freezer) as soon as possible (within hours of sample collection)
- Samples visibly contaminated with blood should be recollected.
- Do not add sodium azide to saliva samples as a preservative.