## What should I tell my child?

It is best to tell your child what is going to happen. Give a short explanation, that is appropriate for their age and development.

## When will I know the results?

The doctor who has referred your child will receive the results, they will be able to discuss the results with you. Some results may be available the same day, some take about a week, and others longer – sometimes as long as two months.

**Please do not call the unit for results as the staff will not be able to give them to you.**

Please ask if you need this leaflet in an alternative format.

**for parents and carers**

**NHS**
**East Suffolk and North Essex**
**NHS Foundation Trust**

# Your child's blood test at Ipswich Hospital

*Children's Investigations Unit
Ipswich Hospital
Tel: 01473 702589*

*Paediatric Assessment Unit
Ipswich Hospital
Tel: 01473 702198*

*DPS: 01465-20(RP)   LN: 3255*

## Where do I need to go?

### If your child is under five years old:

You need to book an appointment at the **Children's Investigations Unit**. You can do this by calling **01473 702589** Monday, Tuesday and Friday between 9 am and 5 pm.

The Children's Investigations Unit is in the Children's Outpatient Department. Enter the hospital through the South Wards entrance (Entrance 2) and follow the signs to Children's Outpatients.

### If your child is over 5 years old:

You can take them to the main Pathology Department, which operates a walk-in system. The department is open between 7.30 am and 5.45 pm, Monday – Friday.

When you arrive please go to the reception desk and say that you are there for a blood test for your child so you will go to the front of the queue. **Do not take a ticket.**

**Please make sure you bring the request forms otherwise we will be unable to do your child's blood test.**

**If your child is over five years old but has additional needs** (such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder), it may help to telephone and speak to a nurse on **01473 702589** to discuss the best place for your child to have their blood test done and make any additional arrangements that may be required.

**Please avoid bringing other children or more than one other adult with you,** as we cannot be responsible for other children and there is limited space in our treatment areas.

## What happens when my child has their blood test?

Your nurse or phlebotomist will invite your child into the treatment room or area. Your child will be asked to sit or lie on the treatment couch, sit on the chair or sit on your lap. The nurse or phlebotomist will advise you the best way to position your child.

The nurse or phlebotomist will examine your child's hands and arms to find a suitable vein from which to take blood. Occasionally we use another site, such as the feet.

If your child is over a year old, we will offer ethyl chloride 'cold spray' which makes the area numb. If your child is under six months old, they may be offered some oral sucrose drops (sugar drops) which makes the blood test less painful.

In addition to the 'cold spray' or sucrose drops, it can help to use distraction measures such as books, bubbles and small toys.

A nurse may help your child to hold their arm still and put a tourniquet (a tight band) around your child's arm. The area of skin is cleaned with an alcohol swab and the 'cold spray' will be applied (if being used).

The needle is then put through the skin into the vein and remains in place until all the blood samples have been collected. The needle is then removed and cotton wool or gauze is pressed down on the skin to stop the bleeding. A plaster may then applied to the area.

While we try our best to get all requires samples first time, it may sometimes be necessary to have more than one attempt.