

How To Take A Proper Hair Sample

1. Wash your hair before cutting your sample using a regular shampoo. Avoid using dandruff shampoos, or any other specialty shampoo or any conditioner. (Head and Shoulders or other brands of dandruff shampoos will alter the zinc reading - Selsun Blue will alter the selenium reading). If you are already regularly using either of those types of shampoo - please avoid their use several days before you take your sample. OR you can double wash the hair with a gallon or two of distilled water prior to taking your sample. Avoid putting any other hair product in your hair before you cut your sample as well.

If you use hair product on the back portion of your hair, using a clarifying shampoo like Neutrogena Anti-Residue shampoo (online and at Target for less than \$5) is a good idea as well.

2. If you have a water softener or well water with high mineral content it is PLEASE wash hair twice with distilled water before collecting.

3. If you highlight or color your hair - it's best to wash the hair at least 8-10 times after the treatment before you take your sample. For permed or bleached hair it's best to wait 4-6 weeks before taking a sample. If you know you will be coloring or treating your hair you can have your stylist cut your hair BEFORE the treatment to collect your sample.

4. Once you've washed the hair -wait at least 4 hours and up to 24 before you cut your sample to submit. Hair should be completely dry before you take your sample - avoid putting long hair in a ponytail and let air dry to get the best sample. Also avoid physical exertion that leads to sweating before taking a sample. Sweat will alter the sodium and potassium readings.

Other possible things that can affect the readings: taking an Epsom salt bath that gets the nape of the neck and hair wet before a sample. Swimming in the ocean or a clay rich creek or lake. If you have been exposed to these kinds of water you'll want to double rinse/wash the hair with distilled water before you take your sample. If you have well water but no shower filter it also may be worth rinsing the hair before you take your sample. We are trying to avoid contamination of any minerals or metal that may end up elevated on your test results.

5. Use clean scissors and cut as close to the scalp as possible. Discard any extra hair to keep your sample to 1 inch long. So if you have long hair send in the part closest to the scalp measure it to 1 inch and cut the rest off and only send in the portion that was from the scalp. The hair furthest from the scalp won't give us your current metabolic picture - only the hair that grew most recently will. You will need about 1 gram to tip your scale from your test kit - or 1 Tbsp. total of hair.

6. Place the hair sample in a clean envelope (no plastic, tape, staples or aluminum foil). The sample will still be viable for testing once it's cut even if it cannot be mailed immediately. Just make sure you label the envelope with the name, age, sex and source of the hair (head, back chest etc...). Pubic hair samples can be used but are not optimal therefore I do not recommend them.

7. If you live in the state of New York you cannot submit your hair sample directly to the lab please mail the sample to me and I will send it to the lab for you.