

For those who will give a specimen or sample

As a patient, you often need to give specimens or samples, such as blood or tissue samples. Samples are also collected at the check-ups offered by the county council. These samples are routinely saved in a so called biobank. A biobank is a collection of samples – blood, cell or other tissue samples – which have been collected in medical care and are saved for a period longer than two months and which can be traced to a certain individual.

Why samples need to be saved

Saving your samples is valuable for us to be able to:

- examine your sample again, e.g. if a treatment does not provide the desired effect,
- reach a correct diagnosis by comparing new samples to old ones,
- send the specimen or sample to another specialist for assessment,
- map and prevent infectious diseases,
- inspect and develop our methods and routines,
- train medical personnel,
- conduct medical research to be able to better prevent and treat diseases.

How your personal data and samples are protected

The personal data recorded when a specimen is taken is stored in a special register. Your samples are kept safely with restricted access. Your data is protected by the Swedish Secrecy Act and the Personal Data Act.

Biobank samples or specimens may not be distributed for profit as dealing in human specimens is prohibited.

Research

Certain samples can be of great value to medical research. All research projects that are started must be approved by a research ethics commission, which deems if the project is of importance to medical care and if it can be implemented without risking a patient's personal integrity.

You decide

As a patient, you are asked to decide how your specimens and samples may be used. The Biobanks [Health Care] Act states that you are to be informed and then decide if you want to give your consent to your samples being saved and for what purpose. If you have consented to your samples being saved, you always have the right to change your decision at any time. *The only decision that cannot be changed is the decision that a sample should not be saved.*

When your sample or specimen is taken, you will be asked for your consent. If you are uncertain and wish to deliberate, we recommend that you consent to saving the sample for the time being. You can withdraw your consent later by sending in a no-counterfoil (stub), which you can get during the visit.

More information

If you wish to have more information, please ask your doctor.