



When Do I Collect My Dutch Test?

Timing the menstrual cycle for proper collection can be challenging for those women who do not follow a typical 28-day month. Some women have short cycles, others have long cycles, a few vacillate between short and long months and finally there are those who still “cycle” from their ovaries but do not actually bleed. Here is a quick guideline to help determine the best days to do the DUTCH test.

Typical 28-day cycle:

Ideally the DUTCH complete or sex hormone test is done on days 19, 20, 21, or 22 (or 5-7 days after ovulation is the goal) if the first day of bleeding is considered day 1.

Short Cycle:

Adjust the collection by the number of days a woman is short of 28 days.
For example, if she has 25 day cycles, collect on days 16, 17, 18, or 19.

Long cycle:

Adjust the collection by the number of days a woman is beyond the 28 days.
For example, if she has a 40-day cycle, she would collect on days 31, 32, 33, or 34.

Irregular cycle:

If she does not bleed regularly or skips months (such as in peri-menopause), first try testing for ovulation. This is done using ovulation predictor kits (OPK) bought at any pharmacy or grocery store. Urinate on one every morning until positive. Once there is a positive OPK it means she is likely to ovulate very soon. Stop collecting the OPK, wait 5-7 days and collect the DUTCH complete or sex hormone test.

If no ovulation/positive OPK occurs the first month and she does not get her period, try again the 2nd month.

If no ovulation or period occurs after 60 days, consider just testing the DUTCH complete or sex hormone test on any day but be aware that the estrogen and progesterone levels will likely be low (or in the menopausal range depending on her age).

If she suddenly has her period, do not do the OPK kits. Count forward from day 1 of her bleeding and collect on days 19, 20 or 21.

If she collected the DUTCH test and started her period the next day or two afterwards unexpectedly, throw out the test (or call the lab to let us know to disregard it if it was mailed) and start over with a new test collecting on day 19, 20 or 21.

Also consider doing the DUTCH cycle mapping by collecting strips throughout the entire month and let Precision Analytical, Inc graph it out.



No Menstrual Cycle:

Some women may not bleed every month due to the Mirena IUD, partial hysterectomy or an ablation yet they still have their ovaries and produce hormones in a regular fashion. In addition, those women in peri-menopause might be so close to true menopause that they skip several periods at a time (ie. only bleeding every few months at random). If this occurs, try following the “irregular cycle” suggestions above with the OPK test or consider doing the DUTCH cycle mapping throughout the month.

Peri menopausal women who have skipped 3 or more months can decide with their health care provider if the OPK is necessary as they are likely near true menopause and are not ovulating. Therefore, the DUTCH complete or sex hormone test can be collected on any day.

Menopausal Woman:

Women who have not had their menstrual cycle in 12 consecutive months are considered menopausal. They do not ovulate and are not bleeding every month. As a result, they are able to collect their DUTCH complete or sex hormone test on any day of the month per their health care provider. The DUTCH cycle mapping is not advised in menopausal women.

Men:

Men can collect the DUTCH test on any day of the month per their health care provider.