Remote Urine Drug Testing

As more and more patients are being seen via telehealth, clinics are asking how to conduct urine drug testing (UDT). Urine drug testing can be done remotely! This handout shares answers to commonly asked questions and an example workflow for conducting remote UDTs.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What kind of technology do patients need for remote UDTs?

The patient must have access to a computer, tablet, or phone that allows live, 2-way, audio-visual capabilities. If a patient does not have access to this technology, the patient will need to provide a urine specimen in-person to a lab.

What is the process for remote UDT?

A full example workflow is below, but the basic steps are:
- Send the patient the remote UDT kit by mail.
- Ask the patient to leave the box unopened until their video UDT appointment.
- Set the UDT appointment with a clinic nurse or lab technician.
- At the video appointment, the patient opens the box on screen, has 2 minutes to provide a urine specimen in the test container, and the nurse/lab technician takes a picture of the results and documents the results in the EHR.
- A provider discusses the results with the patient at their next visit.

Who is a good candidate for remote urine drug testing?

- Any patient who is being prescribed opioid medication remotely would be a good candidate for remote UDT.

How can I translate random testing with the remote UDT approach?

- Your practice may choose to send all patients using long-term opioid therapy a test kit to have on hand, but at random call a patient and ask them to provide a sample within 24-48 hours.

Remote UDTs are working really well, can I keep doing them?

- Yes! If this is a long-term change, consider revising your clinic policies and patient agreements to reflect this process change.

What if I am concerned that the patient's sample is adulterated or the UDT temperature strip is invalid?

In these situations, there are several options, including:

- Repeat the urine drug test

- Send the patient multiple test cups and complete 3 tests in a 7-day period
- Send the patient a saliva test kit and watch the patient perform the test at the telehealth appointment
  or
- Ask the patient to come in to the clinic to produce a sample.

Can I bill remote UDT to insurance companies?

It is important to check with individual insurance companies. Some companies allow you to bill as a point-of-care test CPT 80305.

Where can I purchase a remote UDT kit?

There are several remote UDT kits. One kit we are familiar with is Urine T cups. Urine T cups are affordable and can be purchased here. This UDT is customizable and able to test up to 15 drugs. Oral Cube drug test (saliva) can be purchased here.
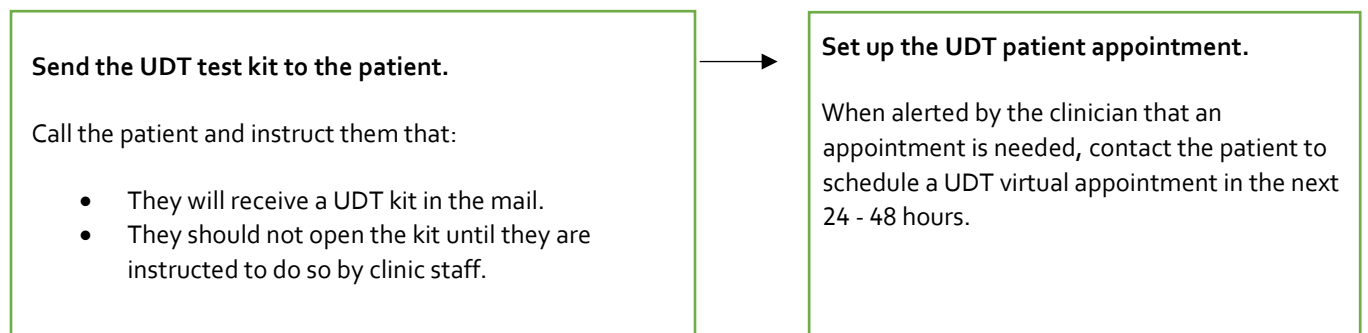
What are the shelf stability and storage requirements for remote UDTs?

It is important for clinics to understand the shelf stability and storage requirements of their specific point of care urine tests. This information is available from the manufacturer. In general, these test kits must be kept out of sunlight, moisture, and heat; stored between 4 ºC ~ 30 ºC; and never frozen. Prior to sending, be sure to check the expiration date of the UDT point-of-care test.

Remote UDT Workflow

If the provider has determined that the patient is a good candidate for a remote UDT, an example workflow for a remote collection process is outlined below. Your clinic can adapt this workflow to its needs.

Pre-Visit (Front Desk)

Send the UDT test kit to the patient.	Set up the UDT patient appointment.
Call the patient and instruct them that: • They will receive a UDT kit in the mail. • They should not open the kit until they are instructed to do so by clinic staff.	When alerted by the clinician that an appointment is needed, contact the patient to schedule a UDT virtual appointment in the next 24 - 48 hours.

Pre-Visit (Nurse/MA/Care Coordinator)

Open a UDT POC visit template in the EHR.

The day of the remote UDT appointment, complete as much information in the template as possible in advance of the appointment.

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Review UDT product information and specimen collection process (see "During the Virtual Appointment" below)
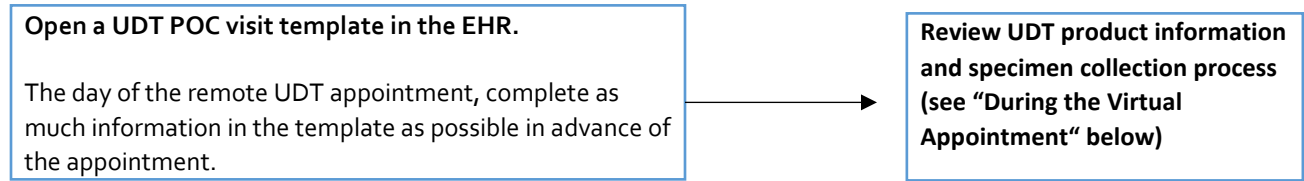
During the Virtual Appointment (Nurse/MA/Care Coordinator)

Educate the patient on the specimen collection process

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Specimen Collection Process:

- Patient opens UDT test kit on video and nurse/MA inspects packaging to ensure it has not been tampered with.
- Patient leaves virtual visit to go to their private restroom and produces a urine specimen within a 2-minute time frame.
- Patient returns to the virtual meeting room with specimen.
- Patient displays the results of the UDT in the web camera within the time frame specified in the manufacturer's instructions.

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Document UDT results in the EHR:

- While viewing the result strip of the UDT, staff enters the results into discrete fields in the EHR in real-time.
- Send POC results to patient's clinician for review.

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Let patient know that they will have a follow-up appointment with their clinician to review the results.