



SCIENCE + INSIGHT

Effective August 1, 2026

To support the highest standards of analytical quality and clinical interpretation, Doctor's Data is updating the acceptance criteria for incomplete or compromised saliva collections effective August 1, 2026.

Updated Saliva Specimen Acceptance Criteria

Doctor's Data saliva hormone profiles generally require four collections throughout the day: AM30, Noon, Evening, and Night. Cortisol is measured individually at each collection time. Other adrenal and sex hormones are measured using a pooled sample created from the submitted collection vials. Hormone levels vary throughout the day, therefore including saliva from each collection time provides a more representative assessment of overall hormone status.

The AM30 sample, collected approximately 30 minutes after awakening, is particularly important because it:

- Captures cortisol during the cortisol awakening response
- Provides valuable information about HPA axis function
- Includes saliva collected when many hormones are at their highest daily levels
- Supports the clinical reliability of pooled adrenal and sex hormone measurements

Without an acceptable AM30 sample, results may not accurately reflect cortisol dynamics or daily hormone secretion patterns.

What Is Considered a Compromised Sample?

A saliva collection vial may be considered unsuitable for analysis for reasons including:

- Insufficient sample volume
- Spillage or leakage
- Visible blood
- Particulate matter or contamination
- Saliva that is too viscous to process
- A missing collection vial
- Other specimen quality concerns

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Updated Acceptance Criteria

Collection Scenario	Laboratory Action
More than one collection vial is compromised or missing	Test cancelled
AM30 vial is compromised or missing	Test cancelled
Melatonin only: bedtime vial compromised or missing	Melatonin test cancelled
One noncritical collection vial is compromised or missing	Testing will proceed using the acceptable specimens. A comment will be included in the report indicating that one collection was excluded.
CAR: Waking, AM30, or AM60 vial is compromised or missing	CAR test cancelled

Testing After Cancellation

We recognize that recollection may be difficult or impossible in some circumstances. When a test is cancelled because of an incomplete or compromised collection, the available saliva specimens will be retained for 14 days. During this period, the ordering practitioner may contact Doctor's Data and request that testing proceed using the available specimens.

Testing will be performed when technically feasible. Results from an incomplete collection may have limited clinical value and should be interpreted with consideration of the missing or compromised collection point.

If Doctor's Data does not receive a practitioner request within 14 days from the receipt of the cancellation notice, the specimens will not be tested and will be discarded.

Questions

For questions about the updated saliva specimen acceptance criteria or a cancelled saliva test, please contact Doctor's Data Customer Service at 800.323.2784 or info@doctorsdata.com.



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