



Contamination of Test Results

Guidelines for Providers and Patients

- Saliva samples may be contaminated in a number of ways, and only trace amounts of hormone are needed for significant alterations in hormone levels to occur.
- Identifying and preventing specimen contamination will save time and money for the patient, healthcare provider, as well as the laboratory.
- If any test results are markedly elevated, ZRT Laboratory will reflexively retest that specimen.
- Healthcare providers are encouraged to contact ZRT physicians to discuss test results.

Common Causes of Salivary Contamination:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hormones applied to the face/neck/chest within 3 days of testing • Hormones applied to the inner arms/legs or other areas that may come into contact with face/lips/mouth • Topical hormones used < 12 hours prior to sample collection • Sublingual hormones used < 36 hours prior to sample collection • Linens e.g. pillow cases and bath/hand towels not changed the night before collection
Exogenous Exposure Sources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close contact with family members or others using topical hormones • Faucets/countertops/towels/doorknobs contaminated with topical hormones • Applying topical hormones for others (e.g. hydrocortisone cream on a child)
Hidden Hormone Sources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Wild Yam” creams may contain actual progesterone (wild yam derivatives cannot be converted into progesterone naturally by the human body) • “Phytoestrogen” creams may contain actual estrogens (listed as “phytoestrogens” or “natural estrogens” from herbal extracts) • Some cosmetics, such as anti-aging/wrinkle-removing/skin firming creams, may also contain trace amounts of hormones (hormones in trace amounts are not required to be listed on ingredients) • Placenta-containing shampoos and lotions (may be labeled “protein rich”)
Occupational Exposure Sources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compounding Pharmacists/Pharmacy Technicians working with hormone powders and creams • Estheticians, cosmetologists, beauty product consultants, and make-up artists applying/displaying hormone-containing products/cosmetics