



Patient guide: what to expect

Sample collection and logistics for BGI VISTA™ carrier screening in the United Arab Emirates. This guide walks you through every step — from booking your appointment to receiving and understanding your report.

At a glance

Appointment	15–20 minutes at our Sharjah clinic (Sahara Healthcare City), or a partner clinic.
Sample	2–5 mL blood in an EDTA tube, or a saliva kit if blood draw is not suitable.
Fasting	Not required. Eat, drink and take your usual medication as normal.
Turnaround	21 working days (VISTA 10+ and 170+); 26 working days (VISTA 1200+).
Results	Explained to you by a geneticlab genetic counsellor, with a written report.

Step by step

1. Book your appointment

Contact geneticlab on appointments@geneticlab.ae or through your treating doctor. Couples are encouraged to attend together — screening both partners gives the clearest picture of reproductive risk.

2. Pre-test consultation

A counsellor explains which panel fits your situation (VISTA 10+, 170+ or 1200+), what the results can and cannot tell you, and answers your questions. You then sign a consent form.

3. Sample collection

A nurse draws 2–5 mL of blood into an EDTA (purple-top) tube. It takes a couple of minutes. If a blood draw is difficult, a saliva kit is provided instead — you rinse your mouth, avoid food, drink and smoking for 30 minutes, then fill the tube to the marked line.

4. Labelling and transport

Your tube is labelled with your full name, ID and date of collection, logged into our system, and kept at 2–8 °C. Samples are couriered to the laboratory in temperature-controlled shipping on a scheduled run.

5. Laboratory analysis

Sequencing and interpretation are performed in a BGI ISO-, CAP- and CLIA-accredited laboratory. Every reportable variant is reviewed by qualified scientists.

6. Your report and counselling

You are invited back (in person or by video) to go through your report: your carrier status, your couple reproductive risk if both partners were screened, and residual risk. If anything needs follow-up, we discuss the options with you.

Practical logistics in the UAE

Where	Our Clinic: Sahara Healthcare City · Sharjah. Collection can also be arranged at partner clinics in the UAE through your doctor.
When	Sunday to Thursday during clinic hours; weekend slots by arrangement. Samples collected late in the day travel on the next scheduled courier run.
Bring with you	Emirates ID or passport, insurance card if applicable, and your doctor's referral or requisition if you have one.
If you are pregnant	Tell us your gestational age when booking — we prioritise your sample and can advise on faster reproductive-planning options.
Repeat samples	Rarely, a sample is insufficient or degrades in transit. If that happens we contact you and repeat collection at no additional charge.

Frequently asked, before you come in

- **Does it hurt?** It is a standard blood draw — the same as a routine blood test.
- **Can I eat beforehand?** Yes. No fasting is needed for carrier screening.
- **Can I use saliva instead of blood?** Yes, where a blood draw is not practical. Saliva gives the same panel result.
- **Do both partners need testing?** Not necessarily on the same day, but couple results are what define your reproductive risk.
- **Is my data private?** Your sample and data are handled under strict confidentiality and UAE data-protection requirements, and are never shared without your written consent.

Ready to book, or have a question?

Email appointments@geneticlab.ae · Our Clinic: Sahara Healthcare City · Sharjah, UAE

Carrier screening does not detect all genetic conditions and a negative result reduces, but does not eliminate, risk. This guide is for information only and does not replace medical advice.