

SPECIMEN COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS

TRAVEL-ASSOCIATED ARBOVIRAL TESTING*

These laboratory instructions provide guidance on how to properly collect specimens and how to successfully ensure safe transport to the laboratory. It is absolutely critical that specimens be collected properly, labeled properly, stored appropriately, and submitted with a complete laboratory test request/submission form.

If you have a suspect case of travel-associated arboviral illness (such as Zika, dengue, or Chikungunya), contact your local health department (LHD) as soon as possible for consult. If your LHD is unavailable, contact the Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology (DIDE) at 304-558-5358 and ask to speak with the epidemiologist on call. All suspect cases are subject to review and consultation prior to approval of testing. Patients must meet current CDC clinical and epidemiological criteria for testing. DO NOT send specimens for testing unless approved by DIDE.

WHAT IS COLLECTED?

Serum is the primary diagnostic specimen type for Arboviral infection. However, in cases where Zika virus infection is suspected, both serum and urine must be collected to ensure appropriate testing.

To collect serum, whole blood should be collected in a “tiger-top” tube with gel separator. Do not collect blood in tubes containing preservatives or additives. After collection, allow specimen to sit at room temperature for 15 minutes to clot. Spin tubes at 2800 rpm for 10 minutes. Transfer serum to a separate sterile, screw-top tube for shipping. Be sure to close the tube tightly and seal with Parafilm or tape. Minimum volume of serum that will be accepted for testing is 1.0mL.

Urine should be collected in a sterile urine cup and transferred to a sterile, screw-top vial. Be sure to close the vial tightly and seal with Parafilm or tape. Do not submit original urine collection cups. Minimum volume of urine that will be accepted for testing is 1.0mL.

CSF should be collected in a sterile, screw-top vial. Be sure to close the vial tightly and seal with Parafilm or tape. Minimum volume of CSF that will be accepted for testing is 0.5mL.

Other specimen types may be accepted for testing. Please contact OLS to consult before collecting.

STORAGE OF SPECIMENS

All specimens (serum, urine, CSF, etc.) must be stored refrigerated (2-8°C; 35-46°F) until shipping. Do not freeze or allow to sit at room temperature.

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COMPLETION OF TEST REQUEST FORM

The Arbovirus Laboratory Human Specimen Submission Form must be completed in its entirety. This form can be found on our website at www.dhhr.wv.gov/ols. The form must contain the patient name (and/or unique identifier), patient date of birth, date of specimen collection, source of specimen, and submitting facility name and address at a minimum. OLS also requires the completion of additional information including date of symptom onset, and travel history. Place the completed form in the outside pouch of the biohazard bag so that it does not come into contact with specimens. **FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION ON THE TEST REQUEST FORM MAY RESULT IN THE REJECTION OF THE SAMPLE.**

PACKAGING AND SHIPPING

Specimens should be packaged in an insulated box and shipped overnight with ice packs. **DO NOT SHIP SPECIMENS IF THEY WILL ARRIVE AT OLS DURING WEEKENDS OR HOLIDAYS.** OLS does not have the means to accept any packages during weekends or holidays. The package must be shipped according to the current DOT, IATA, and ICAO regulations. See our website for complete packaging and shipping guidelines.

ADDRESS FOR SHIPPING

Office of Laboratory Services
ATTN: Central Accessioning
167 11th Avenue
South Charleston, WV 25303

REPORTING

Turn-around-time varies depending upon which test method is used. All reports are faxed to the original submitter, the county health department where the patient resides, and DIDE.

CONTACTS

Questions regarding specimen collection, shipping, and laboratory testing can be directed to the Microbiology Section at 304-558-3530 extension 2602.