

Sera Procedures

1. Criteria for Sera Collection

Any individual presenting with these symptoms: fever, weight loss (cachexia; wasting) and/or hepatosplenomegaly (usually, the spleen is more prominent than the liver), who lived and/or travelled to *Leishmania* endemic region is suspected to have Visceral leishmaniasis (VL). Sera from such individuals can be screened for antibody using the Kalazar Detect™ Rapid Test for Visceral Leishmaniasis (VL).

2. Sera Collection Procedure

Note: LDL recommends the use of serum separator blood collection tubes (SSTs) for acquisition of serum specimens for serological testing. If SSTs are not available, red top tubes can be used.

- a. After blood collection, invert the blood collection tube gently 5 times. Further inversion may cause alterations in specimen integrity.
- b. Position the tube in an upright position and allow the blood to clot for at least 30 minutes, but no longer than 2 hours after collection, before centrifugation.
- c. Spin the blood collection tube as per manufacturer's guidelines.
- d. Transfer the sera to a secondary tube; indicate that the specimen is serum on the secondary tube as well as on the corresponding test request form.

3. Submission of specimens

- a. Send sera directly to LDL on cold packs by overnight courier.
- b. Label the specimen legibly with the following information to prevent delay in testing:
 - Patient name
 - Unique identification number
 - Date of birth; or barcode
 - Date of collection/draw date
 - Serum

Leishmania Diagnostics Laboratory
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- c. Wrap the primary specimen container in absorbent packing material.
- d. Place the specimen tube in secondary leak-proof packaging.
- e. Place the secondary package in an outer container approved for shipment of UN3373 Category Biological Substance Category B diagnostics specimens.
- f. Include the WRAIR LDL test request form (CONUS or OCONUS) with patient's name, date of birth, brief clinical history, and travel history; specimen collection date; and test(s) requested.
- g. Label the shipping container "Clinical Specimen" on the outside of the package.
- h. Include the following information: submitter's name, address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address.

4. Shipment of Specimens

- a. Send specimens and copies of the Leishmaniasis Test Request Form via Federal Express courier to the address below. Label as UN3373 Biological Category B diagnostic specimens.
- b. POC: Laboratory Director, LDL at COM: 240-595-7353 (24 hours Emergency Number); Office: 301-319-2297; Cell: 240-406-6510; email: usarmy.detrick.medcom-wrair.mbx.leishmania-diagnostic@health.mil
- c. Alternate POC: Associate Laboratory Director, LDL at cell: 301-661-2667, Office: 301-319-3512; email: usarmy.detrick.medcom-wrair.mbx.leishmania-diagnostic@health.mil
- d. Shipping Address

**Diagnostics and Countermeasures Branch
Walter Reed Army Institute of Research
ATTN: Leishmania Diagnostics Laboratory (LDL)
508 Research Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910**

5. Turn Around Time (TAT)

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TAT for a histopath smear (Giemsa) is 24 hours; TAT for RT-PCR, and rK39 report is 24-48 hours, unless specimens are received on Friday. Culture results with speciation by Acetate Electrophoresis (CAE) assay may take up to 28 days for culture; 2 days for CAE. The Associate Laboratory Director will provide preliminary verbal reports to the Provider prior to issuance of a final report.

6. Request a Specimen Collection Kit.

Providers may request shipment of a LDL Specimen Collection Kit containing LDL culture media, slides, alcohol pre-filled vials for collection of dermal scrapings, aspirate, and/or biopsy material from LDL. POC is the LDL Associate Laboratory Director as listed in #4.c. above. Request kits with sufficient lead time prior to procedure(s) for LDL to priority express ship the kit to your facility.