Leishmania Diagnostics Laboratory
Diagnostics and Countermeasures Branch
Center of Infectious Disease Research
Walter Reed Army Institute of Research
503 Robert Grant Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone (240)595-7353 – Fax (301) 319-9997

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 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 manufacture'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

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)
9100 Brookville Road, Building 508, 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 led time prior to procedure(s) for LDL to priority express ship the kit to your facility.