

Microbiology User Information: Serological Testing

Indications for Laboratory Serology Samples:

Blood samples for the presence of viral and bacterial antigens and antibodies (IgG and IgM), to help diagnose infections and check immune status, are tested within serology.

For selection of the correct tests and treatment guidelines please refer to the appropriate section on the MTW antimicrobial guidelines: [Antimicrobial Guidelines \(formularywkccgmtw.co.uk\)](http://formularywkccgmtw.co.uk)

Request form requirements:

Providing adequate clinical details to microbiology request forms is vital for the safety of laboratory staff and ensuring patient tests are correctly interpreted.

State relevant symptoms, duration and any foreign travel including place and dates. Some serology tests are added or removed depending on the patient's clinical details. All rejected tests will be reported with an appropriate comment and the Microbiology Consultants are happy to discuss all cases

Minimum volume:

In most cases **5-10ml of clotted blood** should be sufficient for serological tests but will depend on the number and type of tests requested.

Two EDTA specimens of blood are required for molecular testing if possible.

Time to laboratory:

Specimens should ideally be sent to the laboratory the same day, and must be received within 72 hours.

If processing is delayed, refrigeration is preferable to storage at ambient temperature.

EDTA/clotted samples for HIV RNA, HCV RNA or HBV DNA ideally need to be received in the laboratory within 4 hours

For information on transport, including days and times, please see [Pathology Transport Services](#).

Laboratory Testing:

All Microbiology laboratory investigations are based on UK Standards for Microbiology Investigations which can be found [HERE](#). If further advice is required, please contact the laboratory.

Laboratory Turn Around Time (from Date/Time of Receipt in Laboratory):

Turn-around times vary depending on the tests requested- please refer to [test catalogue](#).

Time limit for requesting additional investigations:

14 days

Requests for extra tests must be received within the sample storage period and must be accompanied by a request form. Please telephone the laboratory before requesting extra tests to ensure the sample is available and still viable

Specimen Collection:

Please see: [Order of draw of blood tubes](#)

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Two EDTA specimens of blood are required for molecular testing if possible.

For details of individual tests and requirement please see [Test Catalogue](#)