

5th Floor Daly Wing, St Vincent's Hospital
35 Victoria Pde, Fitzroy Victoria 3065
Tel: 9231 3366 Fax: 9231 3350

AUTOIMMUNE ENCEPHALITIS TESTING

Testing CANNOT be claimed through Medicare or Private Health Insurance

All incoming patient samples are to be accompanied by a requisition and out of pocket consent forms provided by the abovementioned laboratory. Forms can be downloaded from the website:

<https://svhm.org.au/home/health-professionals/diagnostic-services/clinical-neuroscience>

The requisition form is designed to obtain all relevant information in relation to the patient to perform autoimmune tests. Ensure all information is completed including billing. There are no Medicare or private health care rebates for the autoimmune encephalitis testing. Please complete an out of pocket cost consent form.

Autoimmune encephalitis testing may result in administration of treatment and must be accompanied by specialist counselling.

Clinicians are advised to obtain the consent upon consultation and discuss billing with the patient or next of kin. The patient or next of kin must sign the consent and understand the billing arrangement in order to proceed with autoimmune encephalitis testing. All consent forms should also be e-mail to rosetta.marotta@svha.org.au.

No specimens are collected by the scientific staff in the abovementioned laboratory. Please direct your patient to the nearest pathology collection centre. Please note that the requisition form is not a referral slip for specimen collection. Each pathology centre has their own pathology slips (e.g. St. Vincent's Pathology, Melbourne Pathology, Southern Health) which must be completed by the referring clinician for the collection of any specimen.

Please ensure that referral letters are sent to appropriate clinicians to book for collection of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). Contact Department of Clinical Neurosciences and Neurological Research with help on available clinics and bookings on 9231 3340.

Clinicians and pathology services forwarding samples to us are to be advised that it is preferable to contact our laboratory prior to dispatch. **Laboratory hours are from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.** The laboratory is not open on local government and federal public holidays, and there is no urgent testing without prior arrangement.

SPECIMEN HANDLING:

Samples Required for autoimmune encephalitis testing:

To be collected by the nearest pathology collection centre. Please complete a designated pathology collection slip for separate specimens. See below.

Samples suitable for auto-antibody screening:

Blood Serum: Request for **greater than 1ml** of blood collected in serum gel with clot activator tubes (SST II) (white/gold/yellow cap) or greater than 60 µl of serum.

CSF: Request for greater than 60 µl of CSF

Referral letters from clinicians must be sent to the department to book in an appointment for the collection of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). Delivery of CSF should be pre-arranged.

From within the Melbourne metropolitan area, blood serum or CSF, are to be delivered immediately on ice. Samples not available for delivery following collection are to be stored at 4°C and delivered on ice. **Storage at 4°C is suitable for up to 2 weeks thereafter samples need to be frozen and sent on dry ice.**

The laboratory requisition form with the patient's signed consent for autoimmune encephalitis testing must accompany the specimen or can be sent/faxed to the laboratory.