

DONALD E. WILLIAMSON, M.D. STATE HEALTH OFFICER BUREAU OF CLINICAL LABORATORIES

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Guidance for Laboratory Testing for West Nile Virus

What form should be used to request testing?

- Complete the attached BLUE ADPH BCL Lab Slip BCL-140 08/02.
- Please ensure that patient's name, date of birth, date of collection, date of onset and the submitter's full contact information (name, address, and direct phone number) are completed. Also, please indicate if the sample was frozen prior to shipment.

What specimen should I collect?

- Serum specimens should be collected in gold-top or tiger-top tubes with serum separators.
- Allow blood to clot at room temperature prior to centrifugation.
- Refrigerate immediately after centrifugation.
- Serum may be shipped in the collection tube, or poured off into a separate sterile, screw-top collection tube.
- 1mL of serum is **required**, any additional serum is recommended.
- Acute serum is collected **3-10 days** after onset of symptoms.
- **Convalescent** serum is collected **2-3 weeks** after onset of symptoms.
- Specimens should be collected and shipped on cold packs within 48hrs to the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories (BCL). If it will not be received within 48hrs, freeze and hold at -20°C.

How do I collect the specimen?

Blood should be collected by venipuncture.

How do I package the specimen?

- 1. Place the sample into a leak proof container.
- 2. Use an appropriate insulated shipping container.
- 3. Be sure to ship with **frozen** cold packs.
- 4. Place a **frozen** cold pack on top of the specimen(s).
- 5. Place the completed lab slip in second, sealable plastic bag and place in the box.
- 6. Place the Styrofoam lid on the box, then close and seal the cardboard box.
- 7. Place the appropriate shipping labels on the box: address label and UN 3373 (biological substance) label if not already on the outer box.
- 8. Please indicate "WNV" on the outside of the box.

How do I ship the box?

1. You may ship the package on Monday through Thursday (specimen must be received within 48 hrs of collection) to:

Shipping Address
Bureau of Clinical Laboratories
8140 AUM Drive
Montgomery, AL 36117

2. You may take the box to your local county health department to be placed into the courier system (to be received within 48 hrs of collection). The specimen **MUST** be packaged as above before taking to the county health department.

Unsatisfactory Specimens

- Specimens received warm or hot due to no ice packs or melted ice packs.
- Specimens received in any other media besides gold/tiger tubes.
- Specimens received that were collected and stored longer than 48 hrs at 4°C.
- Specimens received without patient identification.
- Specimens where required CLIA demographics cannot be attained.

How Do I Get the Results?

- All WNV test results will be mailed directly to the healthcare provider.
- All specimens, regardless of result, are forwarded to the CDC (Ft. Collins branch) for further testing and confirmation. This includes all CSF specimens, at this time. The additional test results will be mailed when all testing is complete.
- Also, the CDC will not confirm a diagnosis without clinical correlation. Therefore, it is
 imperative the submission form be completed with as much information as possible.

Arboviral Testing Contact information

- For more information please go to www.adph.org/bcl, or call the Emerging Infectious Diseases department at 334-260-3429 or 334-260-3480.
- For information on WNV RT-PCR testing please contact EID.
- For information on other arboviral testing capabilities, including Dengue Virus, please contact EID.

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