

PROTOCOL FOR COLLECTION OF ADULT CSF SAMPLES

Xanthochromia if SAH is suspected *and* CT negative *and* >12 hours after suspected event *and* <2 weeks after suspected event (*and* preferably >3 days after previous LP)
request on Sunrise; indicate CT result and time since suspected event

CSF samples label with the appropriate Sunrise labels, time of LP and ①, ② or ③ to indicate the sequence of collection of plain samples

grey-top tube 0.5 mL CSF (10 drops) for glucose, can be collected first

sample ① plain paediatric blood tube - at least 0.5 mL CSF (10 drops) for total protein

sample ② sterile Universal for microbiology investigations – at least 3 mL CSF (60 drops). Extra CSF may be needed for some additional tests (eg viral/TB investigations)

sample ③ plain paediatric blood tube – ideally at least 1.0 mL CSF (20 drops) for xanthochromia. Samples for xanthochromia must be protected from light.

Blood samples for total protein, bilirubin and glucose must be taken at the same time

Transport place microbiology CSF sample inside plastic specimen bag

place all biochemistry CSF and blood samples inside plastic specimen bags

samples for xanthochromia must be protected from light – use a brown envelope or a Xanthochromia Collection Kit box

all specimens must reach the lab for processing within 1 hour of collection

samples must not be sent by vacuum tube

all samples are analysed at WHH

K&CH and QEPMH –all samples must be sent to the local laboratory for sample preparation or packaging. The local laboratory will arrange transport to WHH

Telephone xanthochromia – clinical questions should be directed to the duty biochemist on 723-6287 (via switchboard out-of-hours)

microbiology – out-of-hours (17:00 to midnight) contact the biomedical scientist on-call via switchboard

Reporting xanthochromia samples must be processed within 1 hour of collection

xanthochromia samples that arrive in the laboratory before 17:00 Monday to Friday or before 10:00 Saturday, Sunday and public holidays will be analysed the same day

xanthochromia samples arriving outside these hours will be analysed the following day. In exceptional clinical circumstances, they may be analysed the same day following agreement and discussion between Neurology and Biochemistry consultants and where laboratory resources permit

microbiology results will be available on Sunrise (preliminary results) or DART (authorised results) as soon as possible. Results will only be telephoned if clinically significant and could influence management of the patient.

Xanthochromia Collection Kit boxes containing 1 fluoride oxalate tube, 2 paediatric sample tubes, 1 Universal container, specimen bags and a copy of these instructions are supplied by Laboratory Medicine Reception on each site. A number are kept in the Emergency Department and will be returned after use. Please contact the appropriate pathology reception, on ext 723-8049 (WHH), 722-3176 (K&CH) or 725-4250 (QEPMH) or on-call biochemist, if replacement boxes are required.