

Muscle & Nerve Biopsies

ACT Pathology coordinates a referral service of muscle biopsy specimens to the Neurology Laboratory at the University of Sydney.

The protocol for collection, handling and transport of these specimens is as follows:

Note: Collection of Muscle & Nerve Biopsy samples must be arranged to take place at the Canberra Hospital campus ONLY. Packaging for this type of testing is outside the scope of other areas e.g. Calvary Laboratory.

- Arrange a surgeon to perform the biopsy. You may also be required to contact the relevant hospital registrar. Please consult the surgeon for advice.
- Arrange hospital admission of patient, if necessary.
- **Alert ACT Pathology by phoning Specimen Referrals, 5124 2845 or Chris Burton (SR manager) 5124 2468 at least 24 hours prior to the procedure.**
- **Notify Min Wang at the Neurology Laboratory, University of Sydney on (02) 9114 4280 or Fax (02) 9114 4291 that you are sending a biopsy specimen.**
- If quantitative biochemistry is required (in addition to histochemistry), the Biochemistry Muscle Unit should also be notified (ph 02 9515 8572).

The Specimen

- Ideally the muscle specimen should be 1cm long and approximately 0.5-1cm in diameter, and the nerve specimen should be 3cm long.
- **It is important that no local anaesthetic comes in contact with the specimen.** (Fascia may be included if microscopic examination is required, otherwise it is generally not necessary.)
- The Electron Microscopy Unit divides nerve biopsies according to protocol before giving specimen to Specimen Referrals. Muscle biopsies should be already wrapped in cotton gauze dampened with normal saline (do not soak the specimen in saline) and place in a sterile yellow top specimen container. Refer to Document AP09.16.
- Any specimens received in formalin are also delivered to the relevant laboratory at Sydney University and not processed by our laboratory.

Phone 02 5124 2932 Fax 02 5124 2815

actpathology@act.gov.au

www.health.act.gov.au/services/act-pathology

Gilmore Crescent Garran ACT 2605 PO Box 11 Woden ACT 2606

- All specimens received in the Anatomical Pathology are given to Specimen Referrals for packaging and sendaway.

Packing

- Packing of the specimen is the responsibility of ACT Pathology. ACT Pathology arranges transport of muscle and nerve biopsy specimens and must take responsibility for their packing.
- Suitable packaging may be collected from Pathology Specimen Reception on Level 2, Building 10 (Contact 51242845)
- The yellow top container containing the specimen must be placed inside a plastic screw top container. It should be wrapped in bubble wrap or similar to protect it from damage.
- The plastic screw top container is to be placed inside the Styrofoam box provided. Ice bricks may be packed around the container. Ice should not be used as the Styrofoam box is not watertight and any sign of leakage will result in the shipment being rejected by the airline.
- The Styrofoam box is then placed inside the fibreboard outer box.
- Arrange transport to ACT Pathology by contacting Central Equipment Services on 0413 515 365
- Specimen MUST be delivered to Pathology by **0900** to ensure same day shipment. Any delays need to be discussed with the referral department on 5124 2845 and the Neurology Laboratory, University of Sydney on (02) 9114 4280.
- ACT Pathology will add address details and appropriate labelling of the prescribed Air Eligibility Marking to the outside of the package to comply with IATA regulations and will complete the necessary consignment note.

Transport of Specimen

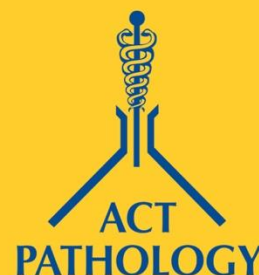
- ACT Pathology will arrange transport to Sydney for Same Day Delivery. Please note that due to airline regulations and the limited availability of flights from Canberra to Sydney, the fastest courier service usually takes five to six hours. Any delay may result in the specimen arriving at the University of Sydney after normal working hours. This will mean that testing will not take place until the following day.

Request Information

The following information MUST accompany all specimens:

- Exact time and date of biopsy.
- Precise identification of biopsy site e.g. name of muscle, right or left etc.

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- Patient demographic details (Full Patient Name, DOB and/or UR Number).
- Referring doctor(s) (to whom reports may be sent) and their provider number(s), telephone and fax numbers.
- Relevant clinical information and tests including nerve conduction studies and EMG's.
- Patient's billing details (is patient a hospital public patient/defence/private)

For any additional information please contact:

Min Wang	Neurology Laboratory	(02) 9114 4280
Tiffany Savli	Pathology Reception	5124 2845

Cost of Testing

The expenses associated with this testing are journalled to the appropriate unit and are as follows:

Cost of testing approximately: \$350 -\$750

Cost of transport & packaging approximately: \$480 -\$600

For any additional information please contact:

Min Wang	Neurology Laboratory	(02) 9114 4280
Chris Burton	Pathology Reception	5124 3992
Tiffany Savli	Pathology Reception	5124 2845