<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Lab Dept:</strong></th>
<th>Microbiology/Virology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Test Name:</strong></td>
<td>CRYPTOCOCCUS ANTIGEN</td>
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**General Information**

| Lab Order Codes: | CRAG (serum)  
CRAGC (CSF) |
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<tr>
<td>Synonyms:</td>
<td>Cryptococcal Antigen</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPT Codes:</td>
<td>87899 – Infectious agent antigen immunoassay, not otherwise specified</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test Includes:</td>
<td>Screen for cryptococcal antigen and titer, if positive.</td>
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**Logistics**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Lab Testing Sections:</th>
<th>Microbiology - Sendouts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referred to:</td>
<td>Fairview University Diagnostic Laboratories- Microbiology (Fairview Code: CRYPTA)</td>
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</table>
| Phone Numbers:        | MIN Lab: 612-813-6280  
STP Lab: 651-220-6550 |
| Test Availability:    | Daily, 24 hours |
| Turnaround Time:      | Performed Monday - Friday 07:30 – 15:00; results are reported within two days. |
| Special Instructions: | ● Specimen site and date/time of collection are required for specimen processing.  
● Consult Microbiology medical director if repeat titers (i.e.: >1 per week) are desired. |

**Specimen**

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<tr>
<th>Specimen Type:</th>
<th>Blood or CSF</th>
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| Container:     | Blood: SST (Gold, marble or red) tube  
CSF: sterile container |
| Volume:        | Blood: 4 mL (Minimum: 1.2 mL)  
CSF: 1 mL (Minimum: 0.5 mL) |
**Collection:**

**CSF**
1. Disinfect skin site with 2% tincture of iodine.
2. Insert needle with stylet at L3 – L4, L4 – L5, or L5 – S1 interspace.
3. Upon reaching the subarachnoid space, remove the stylet and collect 1 – 2 mL of fluid into each of 2 sterile CSF tubes.
4. Transport to Microbiology immediately.

**Blood**
1. Cleanse venipuncture site with 70% alcohol.
2. Draw 4 mL (Minimum: 1.5 mL) blood into an SST tube.
3. Transport to laboratory.

**Special Processing:**

**CSF:** Processing dependant on testing requested
- If specimen is for cryptococcal antigen **only**, store frozen
- If specimen is to be cultured, store in refrigerator, but must arrive within 24 hours.

**Blood:** Centrifuge and aliquot 1.3 mL (Minimum: 0.5 mL) serum into a screw-capped round bottom vial. Store at refrigerated temperatures.

**Transport/Storage:**

Transport specimens to Children’s laboratory at room temperature.

**Lab Staff:** Ship and store specimens at refrigerated temperatures.

If a culture is ordered on CSF, store refrigerated and ship at room temperature. Fairview University must receive the specimen within 72 hours of collection.

**Sample Rejection:**

Specimens with transit time to the lab exceeding 2 hours after collection; gross hemolysis; lipemia; turbidity; improperly labeled specimen; insufficient volume; external contamination. If an unacceptable specimen is received, the physician or nursing unit will be notified and another specimen will be requested before the specimen is discarded.

**Interpretive**

**Reference Range:** Negative

**Critical Values:** The physician or patient’s nurse will be notified of positive results.

**Limitations:** Positive results should be confirmed with culture. Although rare, false-positive results have been reported. False-negative results may occur if a low number of organisms are present in the spinal fluid but the culture may be positive as might be seen early in the course of the disease.

**Methodology:** Lateral flow

**References:** [Fairview Diagnostic Laboratories Web Page](https://www.fairviewlab.com) January 2018


**Updates:**

10/1/2013: CPT update, method change, specimen volume update and transport temp change from frozen to refrigerated.
12/7/2015: Order code update for INK to CRAGC
1/26/2018: Updated blood collection containers