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**Lab Dept:** Microbiology/Virology

**Test Name:** CRYPTOCOCCUS ANTIGEN

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***General Information***

**Lab Order Codes:** CRAG (serum)  
CRAGC (CSF)

**Synonyms:** Cryptococcal Antigen

**CPT Codes:** 87899 – Infectious agent antigen immunoassay, not otherwise specified

**Test Includes:** Screen for cryptococcal antigen and titer, if positive.

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***Logistics***

**Lab Testing Sections:** Microbiology - Sendouts

**Referred to:** Fairview University Diagnostic Laboratories- Microbiology (Fairview Code: CRYPTA)

**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.

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***Specimen***

**Specimen Type:** Blood or CSF

**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)

<b>Collection:</b>	<p><b>CSF</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disinfect skin site with 2% tincture of iodine.</li> <li>2. Insert needle with stylet at L3 – L4, L4 – L5, or L5 – S1 interspace.</li> <li>3. Upon reaching the subarachnoid space, remove the stylet and collect 1 – 2 mL of fluid into each of 2 sterile CSF tubes.</li> <li>4. Transport to Microbiology immediately.</li> </ol> <p><b>Blood</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cleanse venipuncture site with 70% alcohol.</li> <li>2. Draw 4 mL (Minimum: 1.5 mL) blood into an SST tube.</li> <li>3. Transport to laboratory.</li> </ol>
<b>Special Processing:</b>	<p><b>CSF:</b> Processing dependant on testing requested</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If specimen is for cryptococcal antigen <b>only</b>, store frozen</li> <li>● If specimen is to be cultured, store in refrigerator, but must arrive within 24 hours.</li> </ul> <p><b>Blood:</b> Centrifuge and aliquot 1.3 mL (Minimum: 0.5 mL) serum into a screw-capped round bottom vial. Store at refrigerated temperatures.</p>
<b>Transport/Storage:</b>	<p>Transport specimens to Children’s laboratory at room temperature.</p> <p><b>Lab Staff:</b> Ship and store specimens at refrigerated temperatures.</p> <p>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.</p>
<b>Sample Rejection:</b>	<p>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.</p>

***Interpretive***

<b>Reference Range:</b>	Negative
<b>Critical Values:</b>	The physician or patient’s nurse will be notified of positive results.
<b>Limitations:</b>	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.
<b>Methodology:</b>	Lateral flow
<b>References:</b>	<a href="#">Fairview Diagnostic Laboratories Web Page</a> January 2018

Cook, JH, and M Pezzlo (1992). Specimen receipt and accessioning. Section 1. Aerobic bacteriology, 1.2.1-4. In HD Isenberg (ed) Clinical Microbiology Procedures Handbook. American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC

Miller, J Michael (1999) A Guide To Specimen Management in Clinical Microbiology, American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC

Miller, J Michael, and HT Holmes (1999) Specimen Collection, Transport, and Storage In PR Murray et al, (ed), Manual of Clinical Microbiology, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC, pp 33-104

**Updates:**

9/27/2010: Specimen volume changes.

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