

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TICK TEST KIT

MEMORANDUM FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER:

This kit provides you with a quick, easy means of obtaining an identification of a tick removed from a patient, and an assay of that tick for infection with a variety of tick-borne pathogens, including those that cause Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, human monocytic ehrlichiosis, and human granulocytic ehrlichiosis. Since different species of ticks transmit different diseases, and since most tick-borne diseases have very similar early symptoms, knowing the species and infection status of the tick greatly enhances the physician's ability to accurately diagnose and treat the patient.

The tick should be removed from the patient with as little trauma to the tick as possible (i.e., attempt to keep mouthparts intact; do not puncture or crush body). These precautions will decrease the likelihood of pathogens being injected into the wound site during removal and facilitate identification.

Tests performed on live ticks are the most accurate. Negative test results for dead ticks can be unreliable (i.e., they may be False Negative), because the DNA of pathogenic organisms begins to degrade after the tick dies. Therefore, in the case of negative results for dead ticks, the patient should remain alert for symptoms of tick-borne diseases that appear 1 to 4 weeks following the tick bite.

We will test dead ticks, but the condition of the tick specimen affects the quality of the test. A complete specimen, kept cool and dry and **mailed to us promptly**, will yield more reliable results than a specimen that is kept in warm, moist conditions (mold develops, and the tick degrades rapidly). A tick that is in pieces, or even just a piece of a tick, can usually be identified and tested, but intact, whole ticks will yield more reliable results.

Be sure to fill out the accompanying data sheet carefully and return it to us with the tick. We will contact you telephonically with the results of identification and analysis, followed by written confirmation, so be sure to include a POC name, address, and phone number. Provide a sample identification number of your choice so that we can link our results to your specimen, but DO NOT USE PATIENT NAME OR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER as this information is protected by the Privacy Act and is not desired for our records.

Follow these instructions:

1. Place the tick into the vial. Do NOT add water.
2. Screw the cap onto the vial securely and seal it in the ziplock plastic bag by "zipping" it closed.
3. Fill out the front of the data form SUBMISSION OF TICK SPECIMENS FROM HUMAN SUBJECTS (CHPPM FORM 321-R) completely and fold it in half crosswise.
4. Place the data form and the ziplock bag inside the preaddressed mailing envelope.
5. Mail immediately by **FIRST CLASS MAIL**. (If you chose to ship the tick specimen by **FEDERAL EXPRESS**, disregard the address that appears on the preaddressed mailing envelope, and ship to the following: U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine, ATTN: Entomological Sciences Program, 40th & Atkisson, Bldg. E5800, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21010-5403, phone 410-436-3613).
6. Results of tick identification and/or analyses will be provided to you within 3-4 days of receipt of your tick specimens by this laboratory. Replacement kits are available upon request.

If you have any questions, or need more TICK TEST KITS, contact:

U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine
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