

Tissue specimens for free-living amebae (FLAs)

Tissue specimens, including biopsy, surgical or necropsy specimens, may be collected for the detection of free-living amebae (*Naegleria*, *Balamuthia*, and *Acanthamoeba*). The desired specimens include:

- unfixed CSF or brain tissue for culture and PCR
- tissue slides stained with hematoxylin and eosin (H&E)
- unstained slides (for indirect Immunofluorescence[IIF])
- unfixed corneal scrapings (for *Acanthamoeba*)
- paraffin-embedded tissue block

Fresh, unfixed specimens for culture should be sent at **ambient temperature** by overnight priority mail. Please ship these specimens separately from other chilled or frozen samples being shipped. Keeping these specimens at room temperature will facilitate culture because freezing will kill the amebae. For PCR, sterile unfixed specimens or specimens in 70-90% ethanol should be sent by overnight priority mail on ice packs. If specimens have been previously frozen, please send on dry ice or ice packs. Care should be taken to pack glass slides securely, as they can be damaged in shipment if not packed in a crush-proof container. Specimen submission forms for free-living amebae testing are included in this packet or can be requested by emailing dpx@cdc.gov.

Specimens for testing at CDC:

Please arrange Monday–Friday delivery only. Packages cannot be accepted on weekends or federal holidays. Please send any fresh tissue, CSF, whole blood, or serum specimens by overnight express to the following address, using the “FLA” form attached:

**Dr. Govinda Visvesvara
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Bldg 23, Room 9-621, Mailstop D-66
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333
Phone: 404-718-4159; 404-718-4174**

Please include the specimen submission form found elsewhere in this toolkit.

For additional information about tissue specimens or shipping, please **404-718-4159**.

Digital laboratory and pathology image submission

DPDx is a Web site developed and maintained by CDC's Division of Parasitic Diseases and Malaria (DPDM) that uses the Internet to assist laboratorians and pathologists in the diagnosis of parasitic diseases, both in the United States and abroad. This assistance is free of charge. Diagnostic assistance is not provided on the weekends or holidays. If you have an urgent case, please do not delay case management and treatment.

Please send your diagnostic request to dpx@cdc.gov. Attaching several images will assist in making identification.

When submitting a digital image, please include the following information along with your message:

- Your name
- Your affiliation
- Your telephone contact number (optional)
- Mailing address for final reporting
- Specimen ID code
- Type of specimen
- Date specimen was collected
- Stain used, and magnification of the microscopic field captured
- Presumed diagnosis
- Any other pertinent data (e.g., pre or post treatment, travel history, etc.).

If you have other relevant supporting documents or clinical information, please attach them.