**ACANTHAMOEBA SPECIMEN REFERRAL FORM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient Surname</th>
<th>Other names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
<td>m/f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHS no. (or Hosp no.)</td>
<td>Lab no.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Name and address of doctor referring specimen:**

**Name and address for reports** (if different):

**Name and address for invoices** (if different):

**ESSENTIAL:** telephone number for contact relating to this specimen

**Type of specimen:** (please tick as appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of specimen</th>
<th>Right</th>
<th>Left</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corneal scrape / biopsy</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corneal swab</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact lens</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify below):</td>
<td></td>
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**Investigation required:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigation required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture + PCR</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture only</td>
<td>☐</td>
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**Specimen date:**

**Clinical details:**

Please give details of antimicrobial treatment:

Please return form and specimen by post/courier to The Diagnostic Parasitology Laboratory, Faculty of Infectious & Tropical Diseases, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, London WC1E 7HT OR via Hays DX to HPA Malaria Reference Lab, DX 6641200, Tottenham Crt RD92WC. **SEE OVERLEAF FOR SPECIMEN REQUIREMENTS / GUIDELINES**
Guidelines for referral of specimens to the Diagnostic Parasitology Laboratory at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for the laboratory diagnosis of *Acanthamoeba* keratitis (AK)

All specimens should be submitted for testing together with a completed *Acanthamoeba* DPL referral form. See previous page, and available to download and print from: www.parasite-referencelab.co.uk

The highest laboratory diagnostic sensitivity for AK is achieved through use of both *in vitro* culture / microscopy and a probe-based qPCR.

**Contact**: please telephone the Laboratory with queries, or for advice: 020 7927 2427.

**Suitable sample types & sample preparation**:

- **Clinical samples**: the ideal and preferred sample for diagnosis of AK is a corneal scrape / biopsy. The material should be collected with a needle or blade and rinsed into a small volume (1 - 2mL) of sterile saline / sterile distilled water in a small (<5mL) sterile vial / tube. **Remove blades or needles as soon as possible after rinsing and before sending.** Please do NOT leave blades in the tube as they rust: rust inhibits our PCR and may also have a detrimental effect on culture isolation.

  Other clinical sample types:
  - Corneal swabs. Do not send dry swabs: please add a small volume (1 - 2mL) of sterile saline or sterile distilled water to the swab to prevent drying.
  - Corneal fluids, washings etc. should be sent in a small (<5mL) sterile vial / tube
  - Punch biopsies or portions of excised cornea may also be submitted: put sample into a small volume of sterile saline / distilled water in a small sterile vial.

- **Non-clinical samples**. Contact lenses should be sent in their lens cases i.e. in used contact lens fluid. Culture is performed on lenses and associated fluid; PCR is performed on fluid only. NB: isolation of *Acanthamoeba* from contact lens-related specimens, whilst suggestive, does not prove the amoeba as causing the patient’s symptoms. **Please note**: we do not test commercial contact lens solutions (other than that already in the patients’ contact lens case).

- **Culture-positive sample isolates for confirmation / identification**: please send original culture plate, if possible, or blocks of agar from the plate in a sterile vial.

  Please ensure all containers are tightly screwed and use Parafilm (NOT Sellotape) to prevent leakage during transit.

**Specimen turnaround time (TAT)**: is 2 - 10 working days. Positive results from either culture or qPCR method will be telephoned in advance of the final result.

**Sending samples**

- **by post / courier**:
  - Diagnostic Parasitology Laboratory
  - LSHTM
  - Keppel Street, LONDON
  - WC1E 7HT

- **by Hays DX**:
  - HPA Malaria Reference Lab
  - TOTTENHAM CRT RD92WC
  - DX 6641200