



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

<b>To:</b>	<b>Dr. Stephen Cusack, Dr. Eddie O'Sullivan</b>
<b>From:</b>	<b>Dr. John O'Mullane , Consultant Clinical Biochemist, Cork University Hospital.</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>19/ 06/ 2008</b>
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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Requests and Specimens: Spectrophotometric Estimation of Bilirubin in CSF IMPORTANT NOTICE PLEASE RETAIN FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A pilot scheme in the first instance available during working hours only.</li><li>• Specimens received out of hours will be spun and retained until next working day.</li><li>• An audit of the pilot scheme will be conducted after six months.</li></ul>

## **Pilot Scheme from July 7<sup>th</sup>. 2008.**

*Protocol for the collection, handling and transport to the Clinical Biochemistry Laboratory of CSF samples for the spectrophotometric analysis of bilirubin.*

### **Specimen timing:**

CSF must be sampled a minimum of **12 hours** after suspected event. This is essential to avoid false negative results.

### **Request form:**

The following details are essential:

- Patient demographics
- Name of requesting clinician
- Ward
- Clinical indication for request
- Result of CT scan
- Time of onset of symptoms/event
- Time of lumbar puncture
- If differential diagnosis includes meningitis

### **Specimen collection:**

Sample must be taken into sterile universal container and labelled with patient's name, hospital number and date of birth.

**1 ml of CSF** is required for spectrophotometric analysis. This must always be the last sample taken.

A separate sample of CSF must be taken for glucose and protein

**Specimen handling:**

**It is essential that samples for spectrophotometric analysis are protected from light.** This may be done by placing sample immediately in a thick brown envelope outside usual specimen bag or covering sample in tin foil. Then place the covered specimen in the bag labeled CSF Bilirubin. Failure to protect the sample from light may lead to a false negative result.

**Specimen transport to laboratory:**

Samples must be transported to the laboratory immediately by hand. It is strongly recommended that use of pneumatic tube system is avoided.

**Other specimens:**

To aid interpretation, a sample of blood must be taken at the same time for glucose, protein and serum bilirubin measurement.

**NB:**

The accuracy of results of CSF spectrophotometric analysis will be significantly diminished if the above conditions of sample collection, handling and transport are not adhered to.