

Division of Laboratory Medicine

Molecular Microbiology

Hepatitis C viral load

General information

Collection container (including preservatives): EDTA Blood tube

Specimen type: EDTA Blood/Plasma

Collection: Freshly drawn whole blood in EDTA

Specimen transport: Clinical samples should be collected into a sterile leak-proof container in a sealed plastic bag. Appropriate hazard labelling according to local policy should be applied. Specimens should be transported and processed as soon as possible, complying with postal and transport regulations. If processing is delayed, refrigeration is preferable to storage at room temperature.

Minimum volume of sample: 3.0 mL

Special precautions: Haemolysed specimens can be inhibitory; where this is unavoidable, such as with post-mortem samples, the laboratory should be contacted (0161-276-8843).

Plasma should be stored at 4°C and dispatched as soon as possible. An additional 3mL fresh whole blood in EDTA should be sent if the initial HCV PCR is positive.

Laboratory information

Measurement units: IU/mL

Dynamic range: The dynamic range for this assay is 12-108 copies/mL

Turnaround time: The results of all tests will be available within 3-4 working days after receipt of the specimen in the laboratory, and may be available within 24 hrs by prior arrangement with the laboratory.

Clinical information

Clinical decision points: Not applicable

Factors known to significantly affect the results: Haemolysed specimens can be inhibitory; where this is unavoidable, such as with post-mortem samples, the laboratory should be contacted (0161-276-8843).

(Last updated December 2014)