

Division of Laboratory Medicine

Immunology

Farmer's lung precipitins

General information

These tests detect the presence of IgG antibodies to *Micropolysporium faeni* and *Thermoactinomyces vulgaris* (Farmer's lung precipitins).

Specimen transport: At room temperature

Repeat frequency: At significant change of clinical symptoms

Special precautions: None

Laboratory information

Normal reference range:

- *Micropolysporium faeni* - 0 - 22 mg/L
- *Thermoactinomyces vulgaris* - 0 - 36 mg/L

Volume and sample type: 7ml clotted blood

Method: FEIA (Fluoroenzyme Immunoassay)

Turnaround time (calendar days from sample receipt to authorised result): Median - 4

Clinical information

Indications for the test: Hypersensitivity to *Micropolysporium faeni* is a common cause of Farmer's lung, hypersensitivity pneumonitis occurring 12 to 24 hours after exposure to mouldy hay.

Factors affecting the test: In some cases of farmer's lung, hypersensitivity to other fungal species may be implicated.

The absence of IgG to *Micropolysporium faeni* does not rule the diagnosis out. These antibodies can be found in some healthy individuals. The presence of these antibodies supports, but does not confirm, a diagnosis of farmer's lung. There are numerous other causes of hypersensitivity pneumonitis including other fungal spores and occupational antigens. Please discuss with the laboratory if these may be incriminated.

ICE reference: Farmers Lung Precipitins

(Last updated December 2020)