Laboratory Instruction Manual

Assay of Clinical Samples for L-Asparaginase Levels

11601 Ironbridge Rd
Chester, VA 23831
Email: clientservices@nextmolecular.com
www.nextmolecular.com
1. **Contact Information**

Client Services at NEXT Molecular Analytics can be reached at:

US and Canada Toll-Free: 844-812-7415  
General Line: 804-977-6600  
Fax: 804-977-6630  
Email: clientservices@nextmolecular.com

For technical questions or questions regarding specimen collection or shipping, please contact:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robert B. Harris, Ph.D., CSO</th>
<th><a href="mailto:rharris@nextmolecular.com">rharris@nextmolecular.com</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client Services</td>
<td><a href="mailto:clientservices@nextmolecular.com">clientservices@nextmolecular.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Client Services can be reached:**  
8:30 AM – 5:00 PM (Eastern Standard Time) Monday – Friday, except on Recognized Holidays.

**Ship Specimens to:**

NEXT Molecular Analytics  
Clinical Testing Services  
Suite 101  
11601 Ironbridge Rd  
Chester, VA 23831 USA  
Phone: 844-812-7415

2. **Central Laboratory**

2.1. **Role of NEXT Molecular Analytics**

NEXT Molecular Analytics has validated a laboratory assay which can be used to monitor asparaginase levels in patients treated with any of the current Pegylated or non-Pegylated L-asparaginase drug substances, including Oncaspar®, Elspar®, Kidrolase®, or Erwinaze®.

NEXT Molecular Analytics is a CLIA accredited laboratory, and maintains compliance with Good Clinical Practice (GCP), and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and 21 CFR Part 11.

3. **Sample Handling Instructions**

Please follow the instructions below for collection and shipment of **serum** or plasma samples for asparaginase testing.

3.1 **Supplies Required at the Clinical Site**

- Blood collection supplies (for standard venous collection)

3.2 **Specimen Shipment Kits (available from NEXT Molecular Analytics; APPENDIX 1)**

- Disposable pipettes  
- Sample shipment tubes  
- Sample Submission Form  
- Bio hazard bag containing adsorbent paper  
- Styrofoam insulated shipping container, foam cushion, gel pack
3.3 Sample Tube Labeling

- Label the sample shipment tube with a unique patient identifier, which may be a medical record number, a patient ID number, and Date of Birth.
- Information entered on the tube label must correspond to the information entered on the associated Sample Submission Form (APPENDIX 2).

3.4 Sample Collection

- **FOR PLASMA** collection, at each sample draw point, collect 2 mL whole blood into a lavender-capped (K2 EDTA) Vacutainer® Blood Collection tube (note: heparinized plasma is also acceptable)
  - Invert the tube gently 4 times to mix the blood with the EDTA (no longer than one minute after drawing the sample).
  - Place the tube on ice immediately after mixing (no longer than one minute after gently mixing the blood with the EDTA)
  - Centrifuge the tube immediately (within 15 minutes after blood collection), in a refrigerated centrifuge at a speed of approximately 3,000 rpm for 5 minutes.
  - Using the disposable pipette, transfer a portion of the plasma fraction (within 30 minutes of centrifugation) into a suitably pre-labeled specimen shipping tube.
    - Make sure to transfer at least 0.3 mL (300 µL) of plasma into specimen shipping tube.
  - Record the sample date and time of collection on the sample submission form as well as the time and date of the last asparaginase administration.
  - Ship the samples by overnight express mail to NEXT Molecular Analytics (Section 5, below)

- **FOR SERUM** collection, draw about 2 mL blood in plain red top tubes or into a serum separator tubes (SST).
  - Leave the stopper intact throughout collection and centrifugation.
  - If using an SST tube, invert the tube gently five times as specified in the manufactures instructions
  - Allow blood to clot at room temperature for a minimum of 30, but not longer than 60 minutes.
  - Centrifuge the tube at approximately 3,000 rpm for 15 minutes.
  - Remove stopper avoid contaminating the serum with red cells
  - Using a disposable pipette, transfer a portion of the serum sample into a suitably pre- labeled specimen shipping tube.
    - Make sure to transfer at least 0.3 mL (300 µL) of serum into specimen shipping tube.
  - Record the sample date and time of collection on the sample submission form as well as the time and date of the last asparaginase administration.
  - Ship the samples by overnight express mail to NEXT Molecular Analytics (Section 5, below)
4. Sample Submission Form (APPENDIX 2)

- The Sample Submission Form is included in the Sample Collection kit, and can also be downloaded from our web site (www.nextmolecular.com), and is available upon request (APPENDIX 2).
- Complete a sample collection form for each patient at each blood draw.
  - **IMPORTANT: IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THE MATRIX (SERUM OR PLASMA) ON THE SAMPLE SUBMISSION FORM, AND MOREOVER, TO INDICATE THE TYPE OF PLASMA SAMPLE (EDTA•plasma; Heparin•plasma)**
- Enter the Patient and Billing information, as requested.
- **Indicate the diagnosis code(s) (ICD-10).**
- Enter the sample collection date and time. Indicate pre- or post-treatment sample.
- If applicable enter the date and time of the last L-asparaginase administration.
  - It is preferable that the type of asparaginase (Oncoasp, Kidrolase, Erwinaze, Elspar) that was administered is indicated, but this information is not absolutely required.
- Note Special circumstances/errors – clearly indicate if any of the following occurred:
  - Specimen hemolyzed during processing
  - Any unusual appearance or occurrence during processing

5. Sample Shipment

- Place the sample shipment tubes in the long pouch of the bio hazard sample bag. Seal the pouch (see Figure 1).
- Place the sample collection form in the outer pocket of the bio hazard sample bag.
- Place the bio hazard bag into one half of the shipping container against the foam cushion.
- Place the frozen gel pack in the second half of the shipping container, against a foam cushion. (Note that the gel packs should be put in the freezer at least 24 hours ahead of use).
- Close the two halves of the shipping container, and place the shipping container in the outer mailing sleeve. Close the outer mailing sleeve.
- Samples should be sent Monday through Thursday to NEXT Molecular Analytics by overnight express mail. If necessary, samples may be stored refrigerated up to 5 days before shipment.
- Complete an airbill and affix to the outer mailing sleeve, or place the shipping container in an express mail container, or place the shipping container within a larger box.
- **Ship the Specimen(s) to:**

  NEXT Molecular Analytics
  Clinical Testing Services
  Suite 101
  11601 Ironbridge Rd.
  Chester, VA 23831
  Phone: 844-812-7415
Figure 1: Packaging the Samples for Shipment to NEXT Molecular Analytics

Place the shipping tube(s) in the large pocket of the specimen bag. DO NOT REMOVE the absorbent sheet.

Place the Sample Submission form in the smaller pocket of the specimen bag.

Place specimen bag in the shipping container against the cold pack.

Affix the airbill to the mailing sleeve, or place the box inside a large container and send by express mail to NEXT Molecular Analytics.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: Why do this test?
There are two forms of hypersensitivity to asparaginase seen in the clinics. Clinical hypersensitivity ranges from a mild local injection site reaction to full blown anaphylaxis. Since asparaginase derived from *E. coli* is frequently used as first treatment, patients who develop such a reaction are switched to Erwinaze (derived from *Erwinia chrysanthemi*) to continue their treatment because of the lack of cross-reactivity of anti-*E. coli* antibodies to Erwinaze. The second form of hypersensitivity is when antibodies are formed, but the patients do not experience any clinical signs of hypersensitivity. Yet these antibodies can either inactivate the enzyme or enhance the metabolism of asparaginase such that the patient may not have adequate serum or plasma activity levels to achieve an anti-leukemic effect (often referred to as “silent inactivation” or “silent hypersensitivity”).

The asparaginase test will help clinicians identify these patients as well as to ensure that adequate asparaginase activity is present during asparaginase treatment. The assay is done on a plasma or serum sample obtained from the patient after treatment.

Q2: How is the assay done?
Asparaginase activity is determined by a coupled enzymatic assay. Briefly, aspartic acid formed from asparagine by the action of asparaginase reacts with α- ketoglutaric acid in the presence of glutamic-oxaloacetic transaminase, yielding oxaloacetic acid, which oxidizes reduced β-nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide in the presence of malic dehydrogenase, resulting in a decrease in absorbance at 340 nm. The rate of reaction at 37°C is a linear function of enzyme activity.

*E. coli* asparaginase purchased from Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis, MO) is used as the analytical reference standard. A series of nine calibration standards in normal human serum is used to prepare the assay calibration curve. Samples with activities exceeding the upper range of the calibration curve are re-assayed after diluting with blank human serum.

Q3: When should I take a sample and submit it for analysis?
An “algorithm” for sampling has been developed (see Bleyer et al, Pediatric Blood Cancer 2015: 1102-11095). An excerpted version of this algorithm is available on our web site (www.nextmolecular.com)

Q4: How much will it cost? Who will pay for the test?
The cost for assay of EACH sample is $140.00. If the patient is enrolled in a clinical trial, in many instances, the clinical trial sponsor will pay for the additional testing (please inquire of the clinical trial sponsor). Otherwise, NEXT Molecular Analytics will submit payment...
claims to the submitting institution, or will accept pre-payment from
the patient by personal check or a credit card.

NEXT Molecular Analytics can also accept payment from Medicare,
third party insurance companies, and Medicaid (in certain states;
please inquire). If insurance payment is indicated, NEXT will bill the
insurance company for the cost of the asparaginase assay
($140.00), but any remaining balance due (or if the claim is denied)
becomes the patient’s (or institution’s) responsibility. For this reason,
please provide a credit card number on the sample submission form
(or, alternatively, indicate that any balance due will become the
responsibility of the submitting institution). By signing the
submission form, you agree that any remaining balance due will be
charged to your credit card, up to a maximum of $140.00 per sample.

Please complete payment information portion of the sample
submission form.

Q5: What is the expected turn-around time?
Assay results are routinely returned on the same day as the
sample is received.

Q6: Where will the results be sent?
To the requesting clinician, and to those persons specified by the
submitting physician as authorize to receive the sample results
report. The results report will be sent by fax, or by encrypted email,
as specified on the sample submission form.

Q7: How are the results reported?
The results will be reported in terms of IU/mL of L- asparaginase in
the sample.

Q8: How do I interpret the test?
Only experienced physicians treating patients with asparaginase
should interpret whether the asparaginase activity level is adequate.
There are no established treatment guidelines, and the minimal
threshold therapeutic level, once considered to be 0.1 IU/mL, may
now be 0.05 IU/mL, and may even be lower. The decision to modify
asparaginase treatment to achieve a target level must be made by
the physician.

Q9: How can I order sample collection kits?
Fax the Request for Additional Supplies (APPENDIX 1) to 804-977-
6630, or call Clinical Testing Services at 844 812 7415 or e-mail:
clientservices@nextmolecular.com
APPENDIX 1
REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES

LDT ASPARAGINASE ASSAY
REQUEST FOR SUPPLIES
Submit Completed Supply form to Next Molecular Analytics at:
FAX: 804-977-6630 or via EMAIL: clientservices@nextmolecular.com

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Requesting Entity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shipping Address (no P.O. Boxes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City, State, Zip Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity Needed</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Item Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete Sample Collection Kit</td>
<td>SK-LASP-001</td>
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*Collection kit includes all supplies needed for testing and shipping.

**Turnaround time for delivery of supplies is 2-3 business days.

11601 Iron Bridge Road, Ste. 101, Chester VA 23831
Phone 844-812-7415
# APPENDIX 2
## SAMPLE SUBMISSION FORM

![NEXT Molecular Analytics Logo]

11601 Iron Bridge Rd, STE 101, Chester, VA 23831

### PHYSICIAN INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization:</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature:</td>
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### PATIENT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient ID Number:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DOB:</td>
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### BILLING INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>PO No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill to address:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Charge card Payment

(or enclose personal check, payable to NEXT Bio-Research Services, LLC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Card Number</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name on Card</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expiration Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amount to be charged (up to $140 per sample)

By signing this form, you authorize NEXT Bio-Research Services to charge your card for the amount listed above.

Cardholder Signature:

Insurance Billing (see policy statement, pg 2)

(Medicaid approved in AL, DC, KY, MD, MS, MO, NE, NJ, NM, OH, OK, VA)

Attach copies of insurance card(s), front and back.

Provide Charge Card Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy/ID#</th>
<th>Group #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insured's Name</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSN</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance Carrier</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim Address:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Samples should be shipped cold by overnight express mail Monday through Thursday.
NEXT Molecular Analytics

Insurance Billing Policy

If so indicated on the Sample Submission Form, NEXT Molecular Analytics will bill your insurance company for applicable charges for sample analysis. By signing the Sample Submission form and in providing your charge card number (or institutional billing information), you agree that any remaining balance due becomes your responsibility (or the responsibility of the submitting institution), and that any balance due will be charged to your credit card (or the submitting institution), up to a maximum of $140.00 per sample.