

INFORMATION FOR DOCTORS

DONATIONS of HUMAN BLOOD AND URINE FOR RESEARCH

Background

In recent years, public and government concern about tick-borne diseases in people has increased considerably, with parliamentary and senate hearings into Lyme-like disease illness, the establishment of a Clinical Advisory Committee on Lyme disease (CACLD) by the CMO, and lobbying by patient advocacy groups.

Our research team – the Vector and Water-borne Pathogen Research Group at Murdoch University – has studied vector-borne diseases in animals for many years, receiving over \$1million funding from the Australian Research Council and others in the last four years to investigate the microorganisms (bacteria, protozoa and viruses) within Australian ticks. Dr Miles Beaman, Infectious Diseases Physician and Clinical Microbiologist, Deputy CEO and Director of Pathology at Western Diagnostic Pathology (WDP) is providing assistance with sample collection and courier to Western Australia via WDP.

We are well aware that this is a contentious issue. Our aim is to bring evidence-based scientific enquiry to inform the debate about tick-borne illness in Australia. We will use our next generation DNA sequencing techniques to search for microorganism DNA in samples from people with “Lyme disease-like illness”. To be eligible for this study the patient must:

1. Have a history of known tick bite in Australia, or is volunteering samples for later analysis.
2. Have received a diagnosis from a medical practitioner of tick-borne illness as a result of positive laboratory testing conducted in Australia or overseas. (Once again, we are fully conversant with controversies regarding the accuracy, or otherwise, and limitations of some test protocols.)
3. Sign a consent form.

Dear Doctor

- The patient has been advised that this visit to your clinic is at their expense.
- Please counter-sign the Consent Form that the patient will show to you.
- **We are most grateful if you could take blood samples** (see below) from this patient at your clinic. Samples can be collected on any day of the week. The samples we require are:

- A blood sample in EDTA anticoagulant (4-5ml depending on the tube size you use)
- A blood sample into a clot tube for serum (4-10ml depending on the tube size you use)

- The patient is also required to give a urine sample so please provide them with a suitable receptacle.
- We have arranged for transport of the samples to our laboratory in Perth via Western Diagnostic Pathology. **The patient is to take the blood and urine samples immediately to a participating pathology laboratory** and they will arrange transport. Kindly facilitate this by signing the Pathology Request Form and completing your contact details. **Participating Laboratories:**

Laverty Pathology (NSW), QML Pathology (Queensland), Dorevitch Pathology (Vic), and Western Diagnostic Pathology (WA)

Thank you for your assistance with this research. If you have any questions please email us on cryptick.pilotstudy@gmail.com

Yours faithfully,

Professor Peter Irwin, on behalf of the Cryptick Laboratory at Murdoch University

This study has been approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2016/035). If you have any reservation or complaint about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact Murdoch University’s Research Ethics Office (Tel. 08 9360 6677 or e-mail ethics@murdoch.edu.au). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

INFORMATION FOR PATHOLOGY LABORATORY PERSONNEL

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Background

In recent years, public and government concern about the potential for tick-borne diseases in people has increased considerably, with parliamentary and senate hearings into Lyme-like disease illness, the establishment of a Clinical Advisory Committee on Lyme disease (CACLD) by the CMO, and lobbying by patient advocacy groups.

Our research team – the Vector and Water-borne Pathogen Research Group at Murdoch University – has studied vector-borne diseases in animals for many years, and we have received over \$1million in funding from the Australian Research Council and others in the last four years to investigate the microorganisms (bacteria, protozoa and viruses) within Australian ticks. Dr Miles Beaman FRCPA, Clinical Professor at the Universities of Western Australia and Notre Dame, and Director of Western Diagnostic Pathology is providing assistance with sample collection and courier to Western Australia via WDP.

We are well aware that this is a contentious issue. Our aim is to bring evidence-based scientific enquiry to inform the debate about tick-borne illness in Australia. We will use our next generation DNA sequencing techniques to search for microorganism DNA in samples from people with “Lyme disease-like illness”.

Dear Laboratory Personnel – Instructions for Sample Processing

- The patient is volunteering to join this research.
- Blood samples and a urine sample will have been collected at the patient’s doctor’s clinic.
- The patient will provide you with the samples (blood samples and urine samples) and a Pathology Request Form signed by their doctor.
- **There is no need for your laboratory to process the samples in any way.**
- The patient may also provide you a consent form and questionnaire document. Please simply include these in the package that you send to us.
- **Please arrange transport of the samples, chilled, to Western Diagnostic Laboratory in Perth using the Pathology Request Form provided by the patient.**

Thank you for your assistance with this research. If you have any questions please email us on cryptick.pilotstudy@gmail.com

Yours faithfully,

Professor Peter Irwin, on behalf of the Cryptick Laboratory at Murdoch University

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