

## Overview

### Useful For

Providing information to aid in the diagnosis of medical disorders such as storage diseases, CADASIL (cerebral autosomal dominant arteriopathy with subcortical infarcts and leukoencephalopathy), and primary ciliary dyskinesia

### Special Instructions

- [Electron Microscopy Patient Information](#)
- [Electron Microscopy Procedures of Handling Specimens for Electron Microscopy](#)

### Highlights

For more information see [Primary Ciliary Dyskinesia](#).

### Method Name

Electron Microscopy

### NY State Available

Yes

## Specimen

### Specimen Type

EM

### Ordering Guidance

Tumor biopsies are only accepted as part of a pathology consultation, order PATHC / Pathology Consultation.

For nontumorous renal specimens, order RPCWT / Renal Pathology Consultation, Wet Tissue.

For platelet disorders, order PTEM / Platelet Transmission Electron Microscopic Study, Whole Blood.

For muscle specimens, order MBX / Muscle Pathology Consultation.

For CADASIL (cerebral autosomal dominant arteriopathy with subcortical infarcts and leukoencephalopathy) genetic testing, order NTC3Z / *NOTCH3* Gene, Full Gene Analysis, Varies.

For cardiac specimens, order ANPAT / Anatomic Pathology Consultation, Wet Tissue.

For neuronal ceroid lipofuscinosis (NCL) testing, see NCLW / Neuronal Ceroid Lipofuscinosis, Two-Enzyme Panel, Leukocytes or NCLGP / Neuronal Ceroid Lipofuscinosis (Batten Disease) Gene Panel, Varies

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**Shipping Instructions**

Whole blood specimens must arrive within 48 hours of collection.

**Necessary Information**

Failure to supply the following documentation will result in a testing delay:

1. Completed [Electron Microscopy Patient Information](#) must be submitted with each specimen.
2. Tissue source and reason for electron microscopy must be indicated for testing to be performed.

**Specimen Required**

**Specimen Type:** Fixed wet tissue

**Supplies:** Electron Microscopy Kit (T660)

**Container/Tube:** Electron Microscopy Kit or leak-proof container

**Specimen Volume:** Entire specimen

**Collection Instructions:** Collect specimen according to the instructions in [Electron Microscopy Procedures of Handling Specimens for Electron Microscopy](#). **Do not place on ice, dry ice, or freeze.**

**Additional Information:**

1. PATHC / Pathology Consultation may be added if deemed necessary by the reviewing pathologist.
2. **Liver/gastrointestinal and hair shaft specimens are not acceptable.** Testing will be canceled if one of these specimen types is received.

**For neuronal ceroid lipofuscinosis (NCL) testing only**

**Specimen Type:** Whole blood

**Container/Tube:** Green top (sodium heparin) or yellow top (ACD solution B)

**Specimen Volume:** 5 mL

**Collection Instructions:** Send whole blood specimen in original tube. **Do not aliquot.**

**Additional Information:** If test indication is for NCL, whole blood may be submitted in lieu of fixed wet tissue. This is only applicable for a presumptive diagnosis of NCL; **whole blood specimens submitted for any other reason will be rejected.**

**Forms**

1. [Electron Microscopy Patient Information](#) is required.
2. [Electron Microscopy Procedures of Handling Specimens for Electron Microscopy](#)
3. [Pathology/Cytology Information](#) (T707)

**Specimen Minimum Volume**

See Specimen Required

**Reject Due To**

Muscle tissue	Reject
Fat pads	Reject
Hair shaft	Reject
Liver/gastrointestinal tissue	Reject

**Specimen Stability Information**

Specimen Type	Temperature	Time	Special Container
EM	Ambient (preferred)		
	Refrigerated		

## Clinical & Interpretive

### Clinical Information

Transmission electron microscopy is an important diagnostic tool used in the comprehensive assessment of human disease and is most often used in conjunction with other methods such as light microscopy and immunohistopathological techniques. This fundamental technology can provide both confirmatory and diagnostic value to the pathologist and clinician.

### Reference Values

An interpretive report will be provided.

### Interpretation

The images and case histories are correlated and interpreted by a pathologist who is an expert in the field of the suspected diagnoses.

Results will be provided by telephone. If requested, representative images showing diagnostic features will be sent.

### Cautions

Certain factors are necessary for interpretation of electron microscopic images as follows:

- Optimal fixation of viable and representative tissue is imperative.
- The tissue submitted must have been viable at the time of fixation.

### Clinical Reference

1. Jennette JC, D'Agati VD, eds. Heptinstall's Pathology of the Kidney. 7th ed. Wolters Kluwer; 2023
2. Shoemark A, Boon M, Brochhausen C, et al. International consensus guideline for reporting transmission electron microscopy results in the diagnosis of primary ciliary dyskinesia (BEAT PCD TEM Criteria). *Eur Respir J.* 2020;55(4):1900725. doi:10.1183/13993003.00725-2019
3. Schroder JA. Diagnostic transmission electron microscopy. *Imaging and Microscopy.* 2012. Accessed April 16, 2026. Available at <https://analyticalscience.wiley.com/content/article-do/diagnostic-transmission-electron-microscopy>

## Performance

### Method Description

The fixed tissues received are postfixated and stained in osmium tetroxide, dehydrated, and embedded in epoxy resin. Resin blocks are trimmed and semithin (1-micron) survey sections stained with toluidine blue are viewed using a light microscope. Blocks of interest are retrimmed, and the area for observation is then ultrathin sectioned, placed on copper mesh grids, and stained with lead citrate. The sections are examined with a transmission electron microscope operated at an appropriate kV. Images are digitally captured and stored electronically. (Winey M, Meehl JB, O'Toole ET, Giddings TH Jr. Conventional transmission electron microscopy. *Mol Biol Cell.* 2014;25[3]:319-23. doi:10.1091/mbc.E12-12-0863)

**PDF Report**

No

**Day(s) Performed**

Monday through Friday

**Report Available**

5 to 10 days

**Specimen Retention Time**

Residual tissue: 2 months

**Performing Laboratory Location**

Mayo Clinic Laboratories - Rochester Main Campus

**Fees & Codes****Fees**

- Authorized users can sign in to [Test Prices](#) for detailed fee information.
- Clients without access to Test Prices can contact [Customer Service](#) 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Prospective clients should contact their account representative. For assistance, contact [Customer Service](#).

**Test Classification**

This test has been cleared, approved, or is exempt by the US Food and Drug Administration and is used per manufacturer's instructions. Performance characteristics were verified by Mayo Clinic in a manner consistent with CLIA requirements.

**CPT Code Information**

88348

**LOINC® Information**

Test ID	Test Order Name	Order LOINC® Value
EM	Electron Microscopy	34166-9

Result ID	Test Result Name	Result LOINC® Value
71033	Interpretation	59465-5
71034	Participated in the Interpretation	No LOINC Needed
71035	Report electronically signed by	19139-5
71037	Material Received	81178-6
71788	Case Number	80398-1