



# The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital & University of Sydney

## NERVE AND MUSCLE LABORATORY

Level 7, Brain & Mind Centre, 94 Mallet St, Camperdown NSW 2050  
Tel: 02 9114 4280 Fax: 02 9114 4291 Email: Neurology.lab@sydney.edu.au



### Protocol for Sending Nerve and Muscle Biopsies

**Nerve Biopsy:** The sural nerve needs to be a minimum length of 30 mm (3 cm). Take care **not to crush or stretch** any part of the nerve with forceps.

**Muscle Biopsy:** It is important that no local anaesthetic comes into contact with the muscle sampled. The specimen needs to be a minimum cube of 10x10x10 mm (1x1x1 cm). Fascia may be included if there is a need for examination.

**Handling and Transport:** The specimen should be wrapped in gauze slightly moistened with Normal Saline, placed in a water-tight specimen jar labelled with the patient's name, date of birth, biopsy site(s), and the date and time of specimen collection. **Do not** immerse the specimen in saline or fixative. The specimen jar should be transported with **wet ice (do not freeze the specimen)** in an esky to the address below.

**NOTE: NO ANCILLARY TESTING** such as microbiology, flow cytometry or frozen tissue for genetic testing can be performed in our department. Liaison with your local pathology service is required for all ancillary testing. Separate intraoperative specimen must be sent to your local pathology service for ancillary testing.

#### Information required:

- 1) We need at least 24-hour advance notice of the biopsy time and date. **Booking of nerve and muscle biopsies is by email with our completed neuromuscular pathology request form with clinical information/attached clinical letters.**
  - The specimen must arrive at the Neurology Laboratory in the Brain and Mind Centre by **3:30 pm Mon-Fri on the same day of biopsy**. No specimen can be received at the Brain and Mind Centre after 3.30 pm.
  - If the specimen cannot arrive at the Brain and Mind Centre by 3.30 pm, please keep the specimen in the fridge at 4°C at your hospital and deliver the next day. (*Note:* this is suboptimal for biopsies performed within the metropolitan area and steps should be taken to ensure that the specimen arrives by 3.30 pm. This is also not applicable if the next day is a Saturday).
  - If the biopsy procedure has been cancelled, please notify the laboratory.
- 2) Fill out the NEUROMUSCULAR PATHOLOGY REQUEST form, in particular the followings:
  - Precise identification of specimen ie, site(s) of muscle (give the muscle name, not "arm" or "leg") or nerve, and side (right or left).
  - All patient details including **Billing Classification**. For a public outpatient, please fill out the MEDICARE ASSIGNMENT section with patient's signature.
  - Referring doctors (to whom report may be sent) and their **provider number, email address, telephone & fax numbers**.
  - Relevant **clinical information and test results** including distribution of weakness, length of history, all previous medical history, all medications, CK, autoimmune antibodies, NCS and EMG, clinical summary letter/discharge summary.

**Address for sending specimen:**

Dr. Min-Xia Wang  
Neurology Laboratory  
Rm702, Brain & Mind Centre, 94 Mallett Street  
Camperdown NSW 2050

(Note: please deliver to the above address and NOT Royal Prince Alfred Hospital).

**Delivery Dock at back of the building on Church Street (circled on location map)**

Ph: 02 9114 4280 or 02 9114 4281  
Fax: 02 9114 4291  
Email: [Neurology.lab@sydney.edu.au](mailto:Neurology.lab@sydney.edu.au)

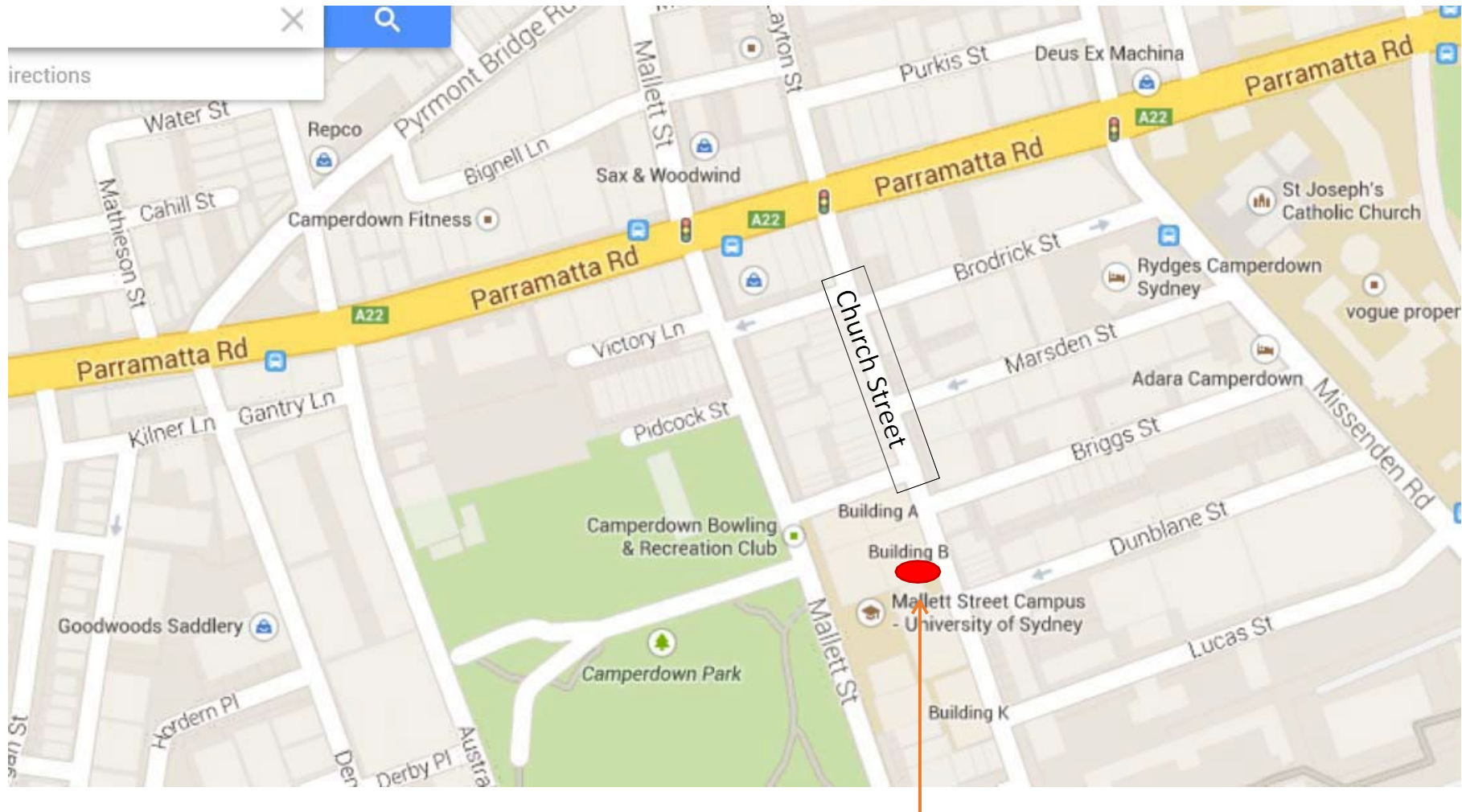
**Protocol for Sending Muscle Biopsies from *Regional* Areas**

**Additional information as follows:**

**Muscle Biopsy:** It is important that *no* local anaesthetic comes into contact with the muscle sampled. The specimen needs to be a cube with a minimum of 15x15x15 mm (1.5x1.5x1.5 cm). This helps to prevent the sample from drying out. Fascia may be included if there is a need for examination.

**Handling and Transport:** The operation for the muscle biopsy should be undertaken in the afternoon. The specimen should be wrapped in gauze slightly moistened with Normal Saline and placed in a water-tight specimen jar labelled with the patient's name & date of birth, biopsy site(s), and the date and time of specimen collection. **Do not** immerse the specimen in saline or fixative. The specimen should be kept cool in a 4°C fridge until the time of transportation. The specimen jar should then be transported with **wet ice (do not freeze the specimen)** in an esky to the address above on the overnight courier to arrive in the morning at the Brain and Mind Centre.

Road Direction to Neurology Lab, University of Sydney  
94 Mallet Street, Camperdown 2050



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