

Original

THE VALUE OF MICROTRAK CHLAMYDIA TRACHOMATIS DIRECT SPECIMEN TEST IN THE DIAGNOSIS OF TRACHOMA

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The clinical diagnosis of trachoma in florid cases can be established with ease. However milder forms are often difficult to diagnose solely by examination and required confirmatory laboratory test. None of the available tests are highly sensitive.

A retrospective study was conducted on 79 trachoma patients seen at King Abdulaziz University Hospital to evaluate the Microtrak Chlamydia trachomatis direct specimen tests. Only 36.7% of the patients had positive test results. Most of those patients had florid trachoma changes and required no confirmatory test.

Our study showed that the Microtrak direct test has limited value in trachoma patients.

Trachoma is the second leading cause of blindness in Saudi Arabia¹. Approximately 22% of the Saudi population suffers from trachoma; only 6.2% have active lesions².

The diagnosis of trachoma is based mainly on the clinical presentation with mild cases often difficult to diagnose solely by examination. The Giemsa stain and the chlamydia culture are the most frequent confirmatory tests used. These tests are time consuming and require an experienced and specially trained microbiologist. The chlamydia culture test is highly specific but not very sensitive test. The aim of this study is to look for other confirmatory tests³.

The Microtrak Chlamydia trachomatis direct specimen test (Microtrak direct test) of Syva company Palo Alto, CA, USA has been found to be highly sensitive (98%) and specific (100%) to chlamydia inclusion conjunctivitis^{4,5}.

This study evaluates the Microtrak direct test in trachoma patients in King Abdulaziz University Hospital.