

Pleural effusion

Gross appearance of pleural fluid and tests indicated

Appearance of fluid	Test indicated	Interpretation of result
Bloody	Haematocrit	<1% - non-significant
		1-20% - malignancy, PE, trauma
		>50% - haemothorax
Cloudy or turbid	Centrifugation	Turbid supernatant -> high lipid levels
	Triglyceride level	>1.24 mmol/L -> chylothorax
		>0.56 mmol/L but < 1.24 mmol/L -> need lipoprotein analysis
		Chylomicrons -> chylothorax
		<0.56 mmol/L and cholesterol >6.46 mmol/L -> pseudochylothorax
Putrid odour	Gram stain and culture	Possible anaerobic infection

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