

Light's Criteria for Pleural Effusions

Transudative and exudative pleural effusions are differentiated by comparing protein and lactate dehydrogenase (LDH) levels in the pleural fluid to those in the blood. Exudative pleural effusions meet at least one of the following criteria (Light's criteria), whereas transudative pleural effusions meet none:

- The ratio of pleural fluid protein to serum protein is greater than 0.5
- The ratio of pleural fluid LDH and serum LDH is greater than 0.6
- Pleural fluid LDH is more than two-thirds normal upper limit for serum (200)