

Anatomic Pathology Specimen Collection Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Proper specimen handling requires that specimen integrity be maintained by proper preservative (where required) and that the sample identification and patient identification be clearly labeled on the specimen container and test requisition. The information below will assist with that objective.

GENERAL INFORMATION

All histology specimens received by the laboratory must be accompanied by a completed surgical pathology requisition that includes the following information:

- Patient's full, legal name
- Physician(s) name
- Patient's Social Security number
- Patient's date of birth
- Patient's gender
- Date of specimen collection
- Source of specimen (anatomic site)
- Brief clinical history/pre-operative diagnosis (CLIA requirement)
- Billing information

Confirm correct patient sample labeling by comparing all of the information listed on the specimen container with information written on the requisition and information verbalized by patient or responsible party (if minor or unable to do so).

The physician and nursing staff should verbally verify the source, nature, number of specimens and appropriate container/preservative prior to the delivery of the specimen to the laboratory.

Tissue specimens received in the laboratory after 4:30 p.m. on weekdays, as well as on weekends or holidays, will be evaluated by laboratory staff to see that they are properly preserved to prevent cellular degeneration. Testing will be done on the next routine processing day.

LABELING SPECIMEN CONTAINERS

Specimen containers should not be pre-labeled. They should be labeled immediately after the specimen is placed into the container.

Specimen containers must be labeled with the patient's complete name, a second patient identifier, date of birth, and specimen (anatomic) site. Specimens must be labeled with patient identification on the bottle, not on the cap. Place multiple specimens in individual containers.

Properly identify the surgical specimen by listing WHAT the specimen is (mass, tumor, bone, etc.) and WHERE (anatomical site) it was obtained. Include whether it is from a RIGHT or LEFT anatomical site. Sterilization specimens (tubes and vas) should be sent in separate containers and labeled as "right" or "left."

A review of the completeness and accuracy of the requisition in comparison with the labeling of the specimen container and patient should occur prior to leaving the procedure site.

SPECIMEN REQUIREMENTS

Most specimens should be preserved and delivered to the lab in 10 percent formalin to avoid cellular degeneration (see specimen listing below for specimens that should not be placed in formalin). Formalin and a variety of specimen containers are available from the laboratory supply department at 630.933.2063. Brown bottles are not acceptable. Use approximately three to four times tissue volume in formalin (30 ml minimum).

CERVICAL CONE

Cervical cone specimens should be submitted to the laboratory flattened/opened in a tissue cassette.

FETAL CHROMOSOME STUDIES

Refer to the test listing (CHROMOSOME: TISSUE) for specimen handling.

FROZEN TISSUE SECTIONS

- 1 Call the histology laboratory to inform personnel of scheduled/unscheduled frozen sections at 630.933.1810. During evening hours, call customer service at 630.933.2633.
- 2 Send frozen tissue to the lab in a sterile container or sealed plastic bag with no added fixative.
- 3 All labeled specimens should be accompanied by a surgical pathology requisition printed or stamped with the patient identification criteria, operating suite and phone numbers.

KIDNEY BIOPSY

- 1 Schedule with histology/pathology staff at least 24 hours in advance (not to be done after hours or on Friday).
- 2 Submit immediately to laboratory (before noon) on saline-moistened gauze.

LYMPH NODES FOR LYMPHOMA STUDY

Submit to laboratory on saline-moistened gauze. After histology hours, contact the PM lab supervisor.

MUSCLE BIOPSY

- 1 Inform histology/pathology staff at least 24 hours in advance (not to be done after hours or on Friday).
- 2 Mayo Laboratories' muscle and billing forms must be filled out prior to biopsy and must include the biopsy specimen (along with the ICD-9 codes).
- 3 Muscle specimens must be wrapped in a moist telfa pad. Bring immediately to laboratory.

MYOCARDIAL BIOPSY

Call the histology lab first for the appropriate requisition, glutaraldehyde and formalin. If immediate results are desired, the specimen must be received in histology before noon Monday through Thursday. The specimen is forwarded to the Cleveland Clinic.

NERVE BIOPSY

- 1 Inform histology/pathology staff at least three days in advance (not to be done after hours or on Friday).
- 2 Mayo Laboratories' nerve and billing forms must be filled out prior to biopsy and must include the biopsy specimen (along with the ICD-9 codes).
- 3 Submit immediately to laboratory (before 10:30 a.m.) on saline-moistened gauze.

RENAL CALCULI ANALYSIS

Use a clean and dry screw-capped container (urine container) to submit the specimen(s) to the lab. Label clearly with patient's complete name and date of collection. Submit with appropriate requisition.

TESTICULAR BIOPSY

Submit to histology in Bouin's fixative which can be obtained by calling histology at 630.933.1810.

POLICY ON RELEASE OF SURGICAL SPECIMENS TO PATIENTS

No tissue specimens will be released to patients.