

## **PATHOLOGY REQUEST AND SPECIMEN HANDLING POLICY**

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Histology and cytology specimens will be accepted for testing when authorized by a physician or other authorized individual via written request.

### **Specimen Packaging**

All specimens should be placed in a container with appropriate fixative as indicated below, and clearly labeled with the **patient's name, date of birth and specimen type**. Specimen containers must be tightly closed to prevent leakage of blood or fixative. These containers must then be placed in a specimen bag with the pathology requisition attached to the exterior of the bag. The exterior of the encasing plastic bag must be free of blood or fluids.

If several biopsies or specimens are obtained from the same patient, care should be taken that **each is placed in a separate jar and individually labeled. Each specimen should be identified on the requisition form.**

All specimens for routine histologic evaluation should be submitted in 10% buffered formalin. Specimens for flow cytometric evaluation should be submitted in RPMI. If this is not available at the time of procedure, the specimen must be submitted fresh (see below). Specimens for direct immunofluorescence should be submitted in Zeus or Michel's medium, which will be provided by PSP upon request.

### **Specimen Delivery**

Specimens for routine pathological examination will be picked up by a PSP courier as pre-arranged. A sticker with the relevant patient demographics as noted below, should be affixed to the specimen receipt log provided by PSP. The number of specimens per patient should be marked with an indelible marker on the relevant patient sticker. The courier will check the specimens received against the list and sign for receipt of specimens when all cases are accurately accounted for. A copy of the log can be made and retained by the submitting physician's office for their record.

Fresh tissue for lymphoma or other special protocols should be treated with urgency, to ensure optimum specimen viability. PSP should be contacted in advance so specimen pick-up can be arranged outside of the normal courier schedule.

Cytology slides for staining and interpretation should be labeled with the patient's name, other unique identifier (eg date of birth), as well as the date and source of material. They should be unbroken and accompanied by a cytology request form appropriately filled (see Pathology Requisition).

### **Pathology Requisition**

Every specimen submitted to the laboratory must have a legibly and completely filled out Pathology Requisition. The information on the requisition must include the **patient's name, date of birth, requesting physician's first and last names, the date of operation and a complete list of all tissue(s) submitted**. If there are multiple parts to a case, each specimen must be separately identified on the requisition **and** on the specimen containers. All specimens obtained at a single procedure should be sent to Pathology together if possible.

**Relevant clinical information should be written on the requisition, including the results of relevant diagnostic tests, preoperative diagnosis, operative findings, and prior diagnoses and treatment.**

The physician should also include information for orienting complicated specimens. Localizing clips and sutures and/or a diagram on the requisition form are helpful as an aid in orienting the specimen. Any special procedures desired (i .e., frozen section, estrogen receptors, lymphoma markers, electron microscopy, special stains) should be indicated on the requisition.

### **Outside Slides for Review**

If a consultation is requested on a case from another institution, the slides should be submitted appropriately packaged. Outside slides should be submitted to PSP with:

- 1) a properly completed Pathology requisition
- 2) a copy of the Pathology Report from the outside institution.

This is necessary to ensure that the correct slides have been received and to provide a gross description.

### **Specimen Refusal**

The laboratory reserves the right to refuse specimens that are received unlabeled, without a requisition, with an incomplete requisition and/or inappropriately packaged (leaking or bloody).