SEROUS FLUID CYTOLOGY: COLLECTION, LABELING AND PROCESSING OF SPECIMENS

I. Principle:
For processing serous fluid specimens, including pleural (chest cavity), abdominal (ascites or pelvic washings), pericardial or joint fluids submitted for cytological evaluation to determine the presence or absence of malignant tumor cells, infectious processes or other diagnostic processes. This procedure also includes cyst fluids.

II. Ordering and Labeling:
- Order the test in EPIC using test code LAB13 for Non-Gyn cytology.
- Enter the Specimen Source.
- Enter the source description in the box on the same line at the far right of the screen.
- When the Specimen Source is entered, another box opens below it for an additional specimen.
- Fill in for as many specimens as needed. Sign the order.
- Go to the Collection activity.
- Select collect all and document collection information by:
  - Click on the pencil to edit all collection information for all specimens.
  - OR click on the blue hyperlinks for each specimen to edit only that specimen’s collection information
- NOTE: additional sources can be added and source description can be modified during collection ONLY before clicking on the Print Labels button.
- Click on Print Labels.
- Label the fixative vial using the EPIC generated label.

III. Collection:
1. If the patient has not been ambulatory, move the patient into several positions to resuspend the cellular material within the fluid.
2. Use standard paracentesis equipment and sterile procedures to withdraw the fluid.
3. If other tests are requested in addition to cytology, withdraw a portion of the specimen and submit it to the appropriate laboratory following their guidelines.
4. A minimum of 10 mls. is needed for optimum cytological evaluation. Recommend submitting entire specimen.
5. Do not add fixative or anticoagulant. If a delay is expected, refrigerate specimen.

IV.