

Surgical Pathology

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Alexandria-based West Central Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, P.A. offers comprehensive pathology and laboratory medicine services to area physicians. West Central Pathologists process all surgical pathology specimens referred for examinations, final diagnoses and other pertinent comments as appropriate. Special staining procedures including immunohistochemistry are performed as required. Results for routine cases are generally available 1 working day (Monday-Friday) following receipt and accessioning in our laboratory. Reports are delivered to your facility by courier, or via electronic interface if applicable. Telephone reports will be made on the initiative of West Central Pathologists for unusual cases or when otherwise deemed appropriate.

All tissues (except tissue for frozen section examination or chromosome analysis on products of conception) must be submitted in an adequate volume of 10% formalin fixative. The tissue container must be tightly sealed, properly labeled and enclosed in a sealed biohazard bag. The accompanying Tissue Examination Request Form should include the following information: patient name, sex, date of birth, nature of specimen, clinical diagnosis, diagnosis codes (ICD-9), other pertinent data, and the name and signature of the referring physician. In addition, if you wish West Central Pathology to bill Medicare/Medicaid, other 3rd party payers and/or patients for surgical pathology services, please include patient address, Social Security number, insurance company and patient policy number, Medicare or Medicaid number, and physician provider number. Fees for professional pathology services are billed separately by 7 Medical. Technical components of pathology services will be billed by Douglas County Hospital Laboratory.

If any questions should arise as to the proper handling of a tissue specimen, please call the West Central Pathology office at 320-762-6068 for instructions.

Pathology specimens are considered inadequate if they include any of the following:

- Unlabeled or improperly identified specimen
- Improper fixative
- Contaminated specimens
- No surgeon's signature for histology specimens
- No requisition included
- The submitting facility will be notified and corrective action taken as needed, which may include specimen rejection.

Cytology

West Central Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, P.A. pathologists offer a full range of diagnostic cytology services. Cytology specimens are examined by an American Society for Clinical Pathology certified cytotechnologist under the direct supervision of the West Central Pathologists. A wide range of cytology specimens are examined by the pathologist for abnormal cells: breast, cerebrospinal fluid, cervical/vaginal (both ThinPrep[®] and conventional), gastric, intestinal, peritoneal, pleural, pulmonary, and urinary. Barr bodies studies, Tzanck smears, and semen morphology are also performed. In addition, West Central Pathologists examine fine-needle aspiration specimens from various body sites, determining specimen adequacy and specimen results. West Central Pathologists review 10% of normal pap smears and all smears showing any deviation from normality including inflammatory changes. All non-gynecological specimens are referred to a pathologist for final interpretation and report.

All specimens should be properly labeled with patient identification. The cytology requisition should include: patient name, date of birth, address, billing information, specimen source and diagnosis code (ICD-9). Provide facility name, submitting physician, and date of collection. Also include any pertinent clinical information.

Cervical/Vaginal Cytology

Conventional pap smears and liquid-based monolayer smears (ThinPrep[®]) are accepted at West Central Pathology. Cervical/vaginal cytology results are reported using the 2001 Bethesda system. For Medicare patients and patients dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare, pap smears are subject to frequency limitations. Collect an Advance Beneficiary Notice (ABN) when appropriate.

ThinPrep[®] Pap: After specimen is obtained, rinse directly into the ThinPrep[®] vial. Label the vial with the patient identification and send with completed cytology request form. The specimen is prepared on the ThinPrep[®] processor in the cytology laboratory. Human papilloma virus (HPV) testing can be performed using the ThinPrep[®] vial contents. It is recommended ASCUS pap results have HPV testing. Call to order the test.

Conventional Pap: Smears should be immediately fixed in 95% alcohol or sprayed with an aerosol fixative. Label the slide with patient identification.

Non-Gyn Cytology

Brushings, fluids, sputum, urine or washings can be refrigerated and sent in the fresh state *if they can be delivered promptly to the pathology laboratory*. If there is a delay, add up to 20 mL of well-mixed specimen to a CytoLyt® Fixative vial. Please label the vial with patient name and specimen source. Clinic prepared slides (direct smears) are **not** needed if specimen is submitted in CytoLyt®. If there is a delay and CytoLyt® Solution is not on hand, please refer to individual test listings for detailed cytology specimen preparation instructions.

Frozen Section Studies

West Central Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, P.A. offers frozen section microscopic interpretation of tissue specimens on a routine and emergency basis 24 hours a day. Arrangements should be made by telephone consultation with one of our pathologists prior to submitting the specimen for frozen section examination. Tissues for frozen section examination must be transported and submitted to West Central Pathology in the fresh state (without formalin fixative). The specimen must include patient identification. The results of frozen section examination and interpretation will be immediately telephoned by the West Central Pathologists to the referring physician.

Postmortem Examination

The West Central Pathologists perform complete postmortem examinations at the request of referring area physicians. All requests for autopsy examination must be communicated by telephone by the referring physician to the West Central Pathologists. A postmortem examination authorization form signed by the next of kin must accompany each body sent for postmortem examination. Medical legal autopsies requested by area county coroners or their deputies will be performed upon their authorization. The consent of the next of kin is desirable, but not mandatory in such cases.