

Guidelines for Specimen Submission to Anatomic Pathology

Extent of Services

Surgical Pathology is that part of Anatomic Pathology concerned with the study of tissue and organ specimens removed from patients, either by biopsy or through a surgical procedure, to obtain diagnosis of a lesion or disease. The pathologist is therefore able to advise attending physician as to nature of disease, prognosis, and need for additional sampling or exploration.

Anatomic Pathology (Surgical Pathology and Histology) Hours of Operation

The Pathology Office is open from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Call 614-566-5526.

For assistance after hours and/or on weekends and holidays please call Laboratory Client Services at: 614-566-1LAB (1522)
Toll Free at 844-326-1LAB (1522)

Surgical Pathology Requisition Form

A completed requisition form must accompany each specimen and should be completely filled out. If using CareConnect, print a CareConnect requisition and place a tissue exam order. The requisition should contain patient's full name (first and last), MR#, or Social Security number, address, and date of birth. Clinical information must include sufficient detail for pathologist to clearly understand what questions are to be answered. Clinician's name and/or name of responsible physicians, as well as clinical service, must be included and must be legible. It is helpful to include pager or cell phone numbers if you wish to be contacted with results or a fax number if you wish report faxed to your office. Identity of specimen should be clearly stated on requisition form and should correspond with labeling on specimen itself. Errors in patient information on requisition form and/or errors in labeling on specimen will result in rejection of specimen or a delay in diagnosis.

Routine Specimen Labeling

Each specimen must be labeled with patient's name (first and last), MR#, date of birth and source of tissue and site and side of body. This information must be on a label on the container, not the lid. When multiple specimens are to be examined and diagnosed individually, each specimen must be submitted in a separate, appropriately labeled and identified container.

Specimens that are too large for a container (i.e., limbs) should be placed into 2 large, red, biohazard bags labeled on outside with patient's name (first and last), date of birth, and specimen source (as above).

Specimen Fixation

"Universal Precautions" are to be exercised in handling and transporting all surgical pathology specimens. Specimens (see exceptions below) should be placed in appropriately sized, tightly-sealed, approved containers with a volume of 10% formalin at least 10 times that of the tissue, and each container should then be labeled with a biohazard/formalin warning label. Proper and timely fixation is a critical step in tissue preparation for diagnosis and importance of this step cannot be overemphasized. Specimen container should then be placed inside a secondary container (i.e. Ziploc® bag or biohazard bag) prior to delivery to laboratory.

Specimens Requiring Special Handling

Several types of specimens should be submitted to Pathology Laboratory fresh (without formalin), in a sterile container, in order that special studies (i.e., cytogenetics, flow cytometry) may be done.

These include:

- Lymph node or other tissue biopsies for suspected lymphoma
- Lung biopsies for pulmonary hemorrhage syndrome
- Products of conception requiring cytogenetic analysis
- Other specimens if required by research protocol
- Specimens for Frozen Section

With many of the foregoing, it is advisable to discuss case with attending pathologist so that appropriate arrangements may be made ahead of time. Please feel free to call Pathology Office with questions about specimens requiring special handling.

Infectious Specimens

Infectious specimens include infectious (tuberculosis, *Mycobacterium avium*-intracellulare [MAI], or other microbiologic agents) tissue specimens that may require cultures. Whenever possible, specimens for culture should be separated in sterile surgical field and submitted directly to Microbiology. "Universal Precautions" should be used in handling all Surgical

Pathology specimens. Other specimens of an infectious nature that do not require cultures should be placed in an adequate amount of formalin. Requisition form should indicate any pertinent clinical information, including nature of infection.

Order of Specimen Processing

The order of specimen processing is as follows:

- *Routine Surgical Specimens:* Routine surgical pathology specimens, including biopsies and resection specimens are accessioned in Surgical Pathology Laboratory between hours of 7:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Specimens received after that time will be accessioned the following day. Slides from biopsies and small specimens are available for review the first working day following accessioning. Turnaround time for these specimens is between 24 to 48 hours, depending on whether special stains or other studies are required.

Larger specimens (ie, colectomies, mastectomies), may require more prolonged fixation and may not be available for examination until second day after processing. Completed Surgical Pathology Reports are available through Pathology Office and through CareConnect. If a case is still in progress, you may contact Pathology Office and ask to speak to responsible pathologist who will inform you about status of the case.

- *Rush Specimens:* Rush specimens have processing priority over routine cases and our goal is to have all rush specimens reviewed by a pathologist by next business morning. However, special stains or other testing may prolong diagnosis.

Policy for Rejection of Specimens

In accordance with College of American Pathologists (CAP) guidelines, it is necessary to monitor adequacy of specimens in terms of fixation, safety requirements, and proper identification. All specimens received by Surgical Pathology will be examined for the following deficiencies:

- No requisition form
- No name on requisition form
- Name on requisition form does not match name on specimen
- No specimen or different specimen than that listed on requisition form
- Improperly labeled specimen
- No physician's name
- No pertinent clinical information provided, if Necessary

- Incomplete requisition form
- Inadequate amount of fixative
- Container lid improperly sealed
- Spilled specimen
- Unlabeled specimen

To prevent specimens from being lost during transport process or unnecessarily delayed diagnosis, specimen cases with deficiencies that are received from our clients will not be returned back to the client, unless all other methods of deficiency correction have been exhausted. Instead, those specimens with inadequacies will require that a clinical staff member either:

- (1) Come to Surgical Pathology Laboratory to correct discrepancy
- (2) Fax corrected information and a statement that clearly indicates source of discrepancy and correction that should be made, along with a date and signature of the person responsible for this correction.
- (3) As a last resort a customer service rep will be sent to the client for resolution.