

Cytology specimens are collected for the identification of premalignant and malignant cells. To obtain a high degree of sensitivity, specificity, and accuracy, it is imperative that cytologic specimens be properly collected, accurately identified, and immediately fixed. In addition, the submitting physician must designate the exact site from which the specimen was obtained and provide the laboratory with pertinent clinical information.

Submitting Specimens:

Please refer to the index for specific specimen collection criteria. All specimens must be refrigerated with the exception of cervical/vaginal samples (Pap Tests) until they are picked up by the courier service or delivered to North Memorial Health Laboratory. Specimens collected that need to be delivered other than the above hours, are brought to the Clinical Laboratory's "Specimen Processing Area".

Note: Do NOT send body fluids (spinal fluid, pleural fluids, peritoneal, etc.) through the Pneumatic Tube System.

Unacceptable Specimens:

1. Cytology specimens collected by noninvasive procedure that are unlabeled/mislabeled, must be recollected.

Note: Gynecological specimens that are unlabeled/mislabeled must be recollected.

2. Body fluids (FNA) collected by invasive procedure that are unlabeled/mislabeled, can be reconciled by using the following procedure.
 - a. Pathology staff will send an "Unlabeled/Mislabeled" form to the customer care site for completion and signatures.
 - b. Signatures are required by all the following:
 - Collector – attests to the correct identification of the specimen.
 - Supervisory staff – acknowledges awareness of the specimen labeling issue(s).
 - Physician – accepts the risks associated with using the results on the specimen to initiate/regulate therapy or assist with diagnosis.
 - c. If a physician is not on site, pathology staff may accept a verbal okay directly from the physician, to release the results.
4. Specimens received in formalin must be recollected.
5. No request received with specimen. A completed form or electronic order must be sent to the laboratory before testing can be performed.
6. Broken slide damaged beyond repair, must be recollected.
7. Specimens spilling out of container must be recollected.