

PERRY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL LABORATORY

Pathology Procedure

Effective 2/96

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PATHOLOGY SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND REJECTION

Proper collection, preservation and identification of specimen(s) are critical to ensure the accuracy of the test result(s).

PROCEDURE

1. Identification
 - A. Specimens should be labeled with the patient's full name, birth date or medical record number, date, physician and type of specimen in container.
 - B. Specimens should be accompanied by a requisition slip with the same information.
 - C. If the labeling on the specimen or requisition is incomplete or the specimen is unlabelled, the person or floor (unit) responsible should be contacted and the specimen should be identified by them and labeled properly.
 - D. If there is a discrepancy between the labeling on the specimen and the requisition slip, the person or floor (unit) responsible should be contacted to determine the correct information.
 - E. In those cases where the specimen is properly identified, but there is incomplete clinical or demographic information, every effort should be made to get the pertinent information by the department contacting the floor or physician.
2. Collection and preservation
 - A. If a specimen has obviously not been collected or preserved properly, it should not be accepted.
 - B. All routine tissue specimens will be submitted to pathology in 10% neutral buffered formalin. Small specimen containers containing the formalin are supplied by the laboratory. Specimens should have enough formalin to completely cover the tissue and should be in a container large enough to accommodate the tissue and formalin. Tissue specimens that are too large for the prefilled formalin containers supplied by the laboratory are sent immediately to the lab in a large container. The person delivering the specimen to the lab notifies someone in the lab that the specimen needs formalin added. The laboratory person who was notified then covers the tissue immediately with the bulk formalin in the lab storage room near the ventilation system.
 - C. The following specimens require special studies and should **not** be placed in formalin but should be submitted **fresh**:

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1. Lymph nodes for lymphoma work-up/flow cytometry (see lymph node/lymphoma/leukemia processing procedure).
2. Tissue for frozen section evaluation
3. Muscle biopsies (see Muscle Biopsy procedure)
4. Nerve biopsies (see Nerve Biopsy Procedure)
5. Products of conception or any other tissues for cytogenetic studies

If in doubt about the necessity of using formalin, keep the specimen fresh, refrigerate if possible and immediately notify the Medical Director of the Laboratory or the pathologist on call for further instructions.

3. Whenever a specimen is unsuitable for testing and must be rejected, the Director of the Laboratory or the pathologist on call should be contacted to evaluate for alternate testing.
 - A. If required, the floor or physician should be notified of the problem and informed that a new specimen must be collected because the specimen was improperly collected or preserved for the test ordered.
 - B. In these cases, the incident should be documented in detail on an incident report form.
4. If no specimen is found in the container:
 - A. If there is no specimen in the container, the office or surgery should be called as soon as this is noticed
 1. If there should have been a specimen (specimen lost, etc.) the case should be accessioned as usual.
 2. Note on the requisition “No specimen in container, discussed with Dr. _____.”, and submit the container for gross examination.
 - B. If there is no specimen in the container and the office or surgery says no specimen was collected (that the empty container was sent in error), the case should not be accessioned.
 1. If it has already been accessioned in that manner, the number should be cancelled.
 2. In **both** cases a QA form should be filled out.

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Laboratory Director	Date