



**Anatomical Pathology Laboratory · Procedure**  
**830 BAYOU PINES WEST · LAKE CHARLES, LA. 70601**

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**PROPER HANDLING OF SPECIMENS**

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**Adopted Date: August 21, 2006**  
**Revised/Approved Date: November 20, 2009**

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**Approved By: Mary F Benoit**

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- 1) A specimen is defined as:
  - a) Any tissue or foreign body removed surgically or by minimally invasive procedure (FNA).
  - b) Any body fluid/effusion aspirated or collected for cytologic examination (ex. pleural fluid, sputum, ascites).
  - c) Any material scraped and smeared directly on glass slides for cytologic examination (GYN smears, buccal smears, etc.).
- 2) All specimens must be collected by qualified medical personnel in the usual and accepted procedure. Refer to specimen collection protocol for proper collection guidelines.
- 3) All specimens submitted to pathology for examination and diagnosis must be properly labeled with patient identification, date specimen procured, specimen site, physician and a second identifier such as date of birth, social security number or chart number.

- 4) All specimens must be accompanied with a requisition for each specimen or group of specimens from same procedure and patient. This requisition must contain patient identification to include date of birth, physician, pre/post-op diagnosis, special testing requests if different from routine histology examination (i.e. cultures, electron microscopy) and specimen identification. Clinical history, if available, should be included for completeness and assistance in diagnosis.
- 5) All tissue specimens, if indicated, must have adequate fixative added directly to container at a volumetric ratio of approximately 1:10 and placed in a biohazard bag for transport.
- 6) All specimens must be hand delivered to the laboratory personnel and placed in the area designated for courier pick-up.
- 7) All specimens need to be clocked in for time received in the laboratory and appropriate fixatives added. The following is a list of specimen requirements:
  - a) **Routine tissues** must have 10% buffered formalin added directly at a wt./vol.ratio of approximately 1:10.
  - b) **Bone Marrow biopsies** are placed in working Formalin for approximately 1-2 hours. Please indicate time on the labels provided.
  - c) **Specimens with cultures** requested. If the Microbiology department sets up cultures on site, place representative specimens for pathology at the designated pick-up site. NOTE: If specimens are received and/or processed after the scheduled pick-up by couriers, notify the pathologist or The Pathology Laboratory for a possible unscheduled pick-up. If specimens are received and/or processed after normal day shift hours (evening/night shifts), place specimens in designated area for routine courier pick-up. **Prompt handling of these specimens is imperative to assure and maintain the viability for cytologic and histologic examination.**
  - d) **GYN slides** may be sprayed with a cytology fixative or placed in 95% alcohol.
  - e) **Kidney biopsies** must be placed in the two fixatives (Michel's fixative for immunofluorescence studies and Carson's Modified Millonig's fixative for electron microscopy) provided to radiology and accompanied with the proper requisition slip.
  - f) **Muscle biopsies** must be refrigerated immediately and notify The Pathology Laboratory for STAT pick-up.
  - g) **Body fluids** should be refrigerated.

- h) **FNA** – see details on Specimen Collection protocol.
  - i) **Stones** – sent in dry state for send-out analysis.
  - j) **Surgical Hardware** – sent in dry state for identification and documentation.
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- 8) Secure all containers lids tightly and correctly to avoid leakage and place in sealed plastic bag.
  - 9) Place all specimens in the designated courier pick-up site prior to the scheduled rounds to facilitate prompt processing and results.
  - 10) Upon receipt of specimen, The Pathology Laboratory will log in and accession the specimen through the Anatomical Pathology Information System.
  - 11) If there are any questions, concerns, or special requests, contact the Anatomic Pathology Department at (337) 436-9557 from the hours of 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Voice mail is available after hours or you may contact the pathologist on call.

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I have performed the annual review of this Procedure

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_