

Pathology Specimen Collection Guide

Proper specimen handling requires that specimen integrity be maintained by proper preservative (where required), and that the sample identification and patient identification is clearly labeled on the specimen container and test requisition. The information listed below is to assist with that objective.

1. Provide general information

All histology specimens received by the laboratory must be accompanied by a completed surgical pathology requisition which includes the following information:

- Patient's full name
- Patient's Date of Birth
- Patient's gender
- Insurance information/Billing information
- Photocopy of patient's insurance card (front and back)
- Physician(s) name
- Date and time of specimen collection
- Source of specimen (anatomic site)
- Brief clinical history/pre-operative diagnosis (ICD- 10 code; CLIA requirement)

Correct patient sample labeling is confirmed by comparing all information listed on the specimen container to information written on the requisition and information verbalized by patient or responsible party (if minor or unable to do so).

Verbal verification of the source, nature, number of specimens and appropriate container/preservative occurs between physician and nursing staff prior to delivery of the specimen to the laboratory.

2. Label specimen containers

Specimen containers are not pre-labeled, but instead are labeled immediately after the specimen is placed into the container.

- Specimen containers are labeled with the patient's complete name, a second patient identifier, date of birth, and specimen (anatomic) site.
- Specimens are labeled with patient identification on the bottle, not on the cap. Multiple specimens are placed in individual bottles.
- The surgical specimen is properly identified by listing WHAT the specimen is (skin, mass, tumor, etc.) and WHERE (anatomical site) it was obtained. Include whether the specimen is from a RIGHT or LEFT anatomical site.
- A review of the completeness and accuracy of the requisition in comparison with the labeling of the specimen container and patient occurs prior to leaving the procedural site.

3. Please follow specimen requirements

Most specimens (but not all) are preserved and delivered to the lab in 10% formalin to avoid cellular degeneration. Formalin volume should be 20% greater than the specimen. Place sample in biohazard bag. One patient per bag; multiple samples from one patient can be placed in the same bag. Requisition form to be placed in the outside pocket of the biohazard bag.

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