

Histopathology

Guidelines for Histopathology Tissue Specimens

- A. A requisition form must be submitted with every tissue specimen. The requisition is either produced by the client EMR system or "Histopathology Requisition" supplied by Meriter Laboratories (ML).
- B. *Specimens from the Operating Rooms/Medical Imaging:*
 1. All patient data requested on the Histopathology Requisition should be filled in, including preoperative and postoperative diagnoses. The requisition must have the surgeon's name printed in the correct space.
 2. All containers must be properly labeled with the patient's identification label. The label must be affixed to the face (side) of the specimen container.
 3. The following specimen containers are available:
 - i. Bottle with fixative – use for small specimens where size permits. Call the Histopathology Laboratory (ext. 77817) for additional containers or questions.
 - ii. Multi-purpose containers – assorted sizes are available. Histopathology Laboratory (ext. 77817) for additional containers or questions.
 4. All specimen containers are to be put into a specimen bag with an attached pouch. This pouch is where the tissue requisition is to be placed. This will keep the specimen container and requisition together and keep the requisition from being contaminated. Most containers will fit in the various size bags that are available from the Meriter storeroom. The use of this bag with the pouch is mandatory for infection control and to keep specimens and requisitions together as they are transported through the processing system.

Note: Writing on the container lids or wrapping the requisition form around the specimens without a label being affixed to the container is not sufficient to ensure proper identification. These specimens will require proper identification prior to being processed for analysis. **Plastic bags are not to be used as the primary specimen containers.**
 5. **If specimen is normally considered to be a "gross only" but a microscopic examination is required, please note "Microscopic Histologic Exam" on requisition form and contact the Histopathology Department at ext. 77817 to convey this information.**
 6. **Limbs for examination should be refrigerated. The limb should be placed in multiple plastic bags and sealed tightly. The requisition should stay with the specimen and may be attached to the outside of the bag. A "Disposal Permit," supplied by Meriter Laboratories, should be signed by the patient and sent with the specimen to Pathology.**
- C. *Frozen Sections:*
 1. **Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.:** If there is not a pathologist already in the fourth floor Pathology Laboratory (where frozen sections are performed), page the pathologist at 129-1331 at least 10 minutes before the tissue is to be delivered. If there is no response to the page, call ML at 608-417-6317.
 2. **Evenings, weekends, holidays:** Page the pathologist on call via the switchboard at 608-417-6000 to notify the on-call pathologist that a frozen section will be needed.
 - i. Fresh tissue is brought to the fourth floor Pathology Laboratory for frozen section accompanied by a completed Histopathology Requisition as produced by your EMR or by using the Histology requisition supplied by Meriter Laboratories.
 - ii. The specimen should be logged in according to the information located in the log book in the fourth floor Pathology Laboratory.
 - iii. **Specimens for frozen section exam should not be placed in fixative.** For transportation purposes, however, they must be covered in a manner consistent with proper infection control practices.
 - iv. All specimens submitted for frozen section exam will also be processed routinely.
- D. *Breast Specimens:*
 1. Specimens should be immersed in formalin within 1 hour of the biopsy or resection procedure.
 2. For any breast specimen, please document not only the collection time but also the time the tissue was placed in formalin.
 3. The volume of formalin should be at least 10 times the volume of the specimen.
 4. For larger resections, CAP recommends the tumor be bisected prior to immersion in the fixative. In such cases, it is important to retain the orientation and margins. Alternatively, the margins may be separately submitted if orientation is clearly indicated.
- E. *Special Studies Requests:*
 1. The pathologist must be contacted immediately for any special studies that may be requested on a specimen. Do not put the tissue into fixative or any other solution until the pathologist is contacted and has indicated the correct solution to use. (Many special studies cannot be performed on formalin-fixed tissue.)
 2. Indicate what type of special studies are being requested.
 3. If a pathologist cannot be contacted, call the Histopathology Laboratory at ext. 77817 from 7 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday for information. The tissue may be put in a saline solution only and refrigerated until a pathologist is contacted.
 4. If a biopsy is required STAT or a diagnosis is needed on Saturday, the staff pathologist on call must be consulted by 3 p.m. on Friday.

5. If special studies on tissue are going to be sent out to a reference laboratory (i.e. genetic studies, muscle or nerve biopsy, etc.) these specimens must go through the ML Histopathology Laboratory. They will be recorded and sent out to the laboratory as requested. **Specimens should never be sent out before being processed through the Histopathology Laboratory.**
6. **If a specimen is to have a microbiology study done also, write “Microbiology Also” on the requisition. Do not place these specimens in formalin.**

F. *Specimens from Meriter Hospital:*

1. All specimens should be submitted to the Histopathology Laboratory via Surgical Pathology Laboratory, 4 Tower or Specimen Processing at ML.
2. All patient data requested on the “Histopathology Requisition” should be filled in, including clinical information, working diagnosis and the requesting physician.
3. Bottles with fixative and other multi-purpose specimen containers, including cytogenetic tissue media, are available from ML Histopathology and 4 Tower Pathology Laboratory.
4. All containers must be properly labeled with the patient’s identification label. The label must be affixed to the face of the specimen container. The container is to be put in a plastic Ziploc pouch bag. The requisition is to be put in the pouch (not with the specimen). Do not write on the container lids or wrap the requisition form around the specimen. A label must be affixed to the container to ensure proper identification.
5. All specimens from isolation patients should be labeled, put in a fluid-tight container and then into the plastic biohazard Ziploc bag. (Biohazard plastic Ziploc pouch bags are not to be used as the primary specimen containers.)
6. IF the specimen is normally considered to be a “gross only” (per the Practice Committee), but a microscopic examination is requested by the physician, this should be noted “Microscopic Histologic Exam: on the requisition from.
7. Contact the Histopathology Laboratory at ext. 77817 for more information.

G. *Specimens from Clinics or Outside Hospitals:*

1. All specimens should be submitted to the Histopathology Laboratory.
2. All patient data requested on the Histopathology Requisition should be filled in, including clinical information, working diagnosis and requesting physician.
3. Bottles with fixatives and other multi-purpose specimen containers are supplied by ML.
4. All containers must be properly labeled with the patient’s identification label. The label must be affixed to the face of the specimen container. The container is to be put in a plastic Ziploc pouch bag. The requisition is to be put in the pouch. Do not write on the container lids or wrap the requisition form around the specimen container.
5. All specimens from isolation patients should be labeled, put in a fluid-tight container, and then into the plastic biohazard Ziploc bag. (Biohazard plastic Ziploc pouch bags are not to be used as the primary specimen containers.)
6. If the specimen is normally considered to be a “gross only” (per the Practice Committee), but a microscopic examination is requested by the physician, this should be noted “Microscopic Histologic Exam” on the requisition form.
7. Contact the Histopathology Laboratory at ext. 77817 for more information.