

<b>Title:</b> Specimen Collection and Handling		
<b>Policy Used at:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GSRMC <input type="checkbox"/> SAGH <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLCH <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SNLH <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SPCH		
<b>Effective:</b> 4/1999	<b>Revision:</b> 5	<b>Revised:</b> 5/19/2010
<b>2010 Revision summary:</b> New policy/procedure format. Changed pickup times for specimens on weekends and holidays. Frozen section specimens no longer picked up from Surgery by Lab staff.		
<b>Accepted:</b> _____ <b>Date:</b> _____		
Stephen F. Hogan, MD Laboratory Medical Director		

## **Specimen Collection and Handling**

### **INTENDED USE:**

To preserve tissue specimens and to provide for their processing in a timely fashion.

To ensure a smooth flow of specimens from surgery, and other outpatient sources.

### **PRINCIPLE:**

This procedure provides instruction for the collection and handling of pathology specimens.

Every specimen must be accompanied by a completed Patient Request Form or the specimen will be considered inadequate and returned for proper identification.

Note: Specimens from GSRMC, SNLH, SPCH, SLCH and surrounding Physician Offices will be accessioned at GSRMC lab, logged into the computer, assigned a GS#, grossed and processed in the lab.

Specimens from SAGH are accessioned at SAGH and come to GSRMC in cassettes with a copy of the SAGH log book for processing only.

### **PROCEDURE - STEPWISE:**

#### **A. ROUTINE SPECIMENS**

1. **Each specimen container** and the accompanying **requisition slip** must be labeled with **two** unique patient identifiers including the **patient's name** (first and last), **and** the patient's **date of birth**.

The specimen container must also include the **specimen source** (body location, right versus left, etc.). For multiple specimens on the same patient, the containers should also be numbered.

For example, for a skin biopsy:

Specimen label: **John Redd**  
**DOB 12/13/55**  
**1) Right cheek skin**

2. The same information must also be provided on (and match) both pages of the accompanying Pathology requisition slip.

3. The requisition slip should also include:

- Patient age
- Patient sex
- Submitting physician's name
- Preoperative diagnosis and/or pertinent clinical information
- Postoperative diagnosis (where applicable)
- ICD-9 code (outpatients)

4. Preservatives

- a. Routine surgical specimens, are submitted in 10% Neutral Buffered Formalin (for surgical specimens, completely fill the container with formalin).
- b. **Formalin is a possible carcinogen, and appropriate caution labels must be affixed to the containers.**
- c. Personnel should be trained in formalin handling and use. Refer to a current MSDS for further information.
- d. Place container in a biohazard bag and seal bag.
- e. Place paperwork in pocket of biohazard bag. Do **not** put the requisition inside the bag with specimen.

**B. FROZEN SECTIONS**

**Frozen sections are submitted fresh, (without formalin added) and accompanied by a frozen section report form with all pertinent information filled out.** The form will include the OR number (which is the phone extension) and the anesthesia status of the patient.

**C. SPECIAL HANDLING**

- 1. Breast biopsies performed for mammographically identified calcium or tumor mass should be first submitted fresh to the X-ray department by Surgery to determine whether or not the calcium or mass is present in the specimen. The specimen is then sent to Pathology.
- 2. The following specimens will not be put into formalin:
  - a. Stones for chemical analysis
  - b. All tissue sent for frozen section
  - c. Lymph nodes for suspected lymphoma
- 3. If special testing is anticipated, consult with the pathologist prior to the operation to ensure proper handling.

#### **D. SPECIMEN COLLECTION**

1. Histology personnel will routinely pick up specimens in the pass through at 1000, 1200, 1400 and 1630 Monday through Friday.
2. Specimen Handling will routinely check for specimens at 1800, 2000 and 2300.
3. On weekends and holidays pick up will occur at 0830 and 1800.
4. The person picking up the specimens will compare the containers with the requisition. Any discrepancy will be brought to the attention of the Surgery department at extension 5013. The discrepancy must be resolved before the specimen is processed.
5. Surgery will check the pass through at 2300 and phone the laboratory at extension 5059 for pick up if any specimens are there.
6. During the 2300-0730 shift, the surgery staff will check the pass through after each case and deliver the specimens to the laboratory.
7. Other Specimens:
  - a. After hours, contact Specimen Handling at 5059, (then select 3) in order to reach the pathologist on call.
  - b. For all other specimens (Microbiology, Blood Bank, Clinical Lab specimens, etc.), surgery personnel should phone extension 5059, then select 3.

#### **REFERENCES:**

Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center, Laboratory Services Manual, Histopathology Specimen Handling, 2004.

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