

## Specimen Receiving: Anatomic Pathology

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### SPECIMEN RECEIVING AREAS

The Anatomic Pathology Receiving Area is located at the VCU Medical Center in the Gateway Building on the 6th floor. Specimens are received from inpatient hospital units, outpatient clinics, research grant programs, and outreach services. Clinical history is required for all patient samples. All specimens must be labeled with a minimum of two patient identifiers (name and date of birth). For neuropathology specimens, bone tumors, or consults, the radiology report and films are also requested. Consult material should be accompanied by any associated pathology report(s), including any preliminary report(s), H&E slides, and paraffin blocks where possible.

### SPECIMEN RECEIVING PROCEDURES

**Histopathology specimens** are received at the Gateway Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Receiving Area, fresh (unfixed), and properly labeled and packaged during working hours from 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday. Specimens are otherwise refrigerated (not frozen) and retained in the Operating Rooms or sent to the Specimen Receiving Area located in the Clinical Support Center on the 6th floor until the laboratory is open for delivery. All tissue specimens of the same patient received on the same day are given the same accession number. All tissue specimens received will be checked for prior accession number on that same day. Consult cases are delivered to the Anatomic Pathology Receiving Area. These cases are registered and given an accession number within 2 hours of receipt and delivered to the appropriate faculty member and/or laboratory.

**Cytopathology specimens** are received in the Gateway Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Receiving Area 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday. After hours, specimen may be received in Central Receiving and Processing, Clinical Support Center, 6th floor. Each cytology sample must be accompanied by either an electronically generated sheet or manual requisition which will be accessioned in CIS. Non-gynecologic specimens must be fresh (unfixed) to be processed. Fine needle aspiration biopsy slides collected by non-pathology clinicians must be labeled with two patient identifiers written on the slide(s). These slides must NOT be refrigerated.

**Hematopathology specimens** are received in Central Receiving and Processing, Clinical Support Center, 6th floor. Each Hematopathology specimens must be accompanied by a manual requisition. Specimens are accessioned in CIS.

**Ancillary testing specimens** for immunohistochemistry, hormone receptors, *in situ* hybridization, immunofluorescence and electron microscopy are received in the Gateway Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Receiving Area 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday. After hours, specimens may be received in the Clinical Support Center Receiving Area. All specimens received are given an accession number upon receipt. Consult cases are delivered to the Gateway Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Receiving Area. These cases are registered and given an accession number and delivered to the appropriate faculty member and/or laboratory within 2 hours of receipt.

## **GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTABLE / UNACCEPTABLE SPECIMENS AND REJECTION CRITERIA**

The proper collection and transportation of specimens to the laboratory for analyses is required by the laboratory to provide valid results for patient care. Specimens which are improperly collected or transported may result in invalid results and thus adversely affect patient care. Therefore, specimens which do not meet acceptable criteria may be rejected by the laboratory and a recollection where appropriate requested. The following are criteria used for the possible rejection of specimens:

- specimen improperly labeled (unlabeled or mislabeled) as to the patient identity
- improper collection/fixation
- incomplete test requisition (ie, required information not present)
- excessive delay in specimen transport or improperly transported (ie, not on ice when required)
- specimen contaminated with biological hazardous material

If a specimen is determined to be unacceptable, the physician or laboratory will be contacted and informed that a new specimen is required, and notification will be documented. If an unacceptable specimen cannot be recollected (irreplaceable specimen), the requested analyses may be performed with written approval by the ordering physician and a staff pathologist or resident in pathology. The specimen problem will be noted on the result report.

**Cytopathology:** All specimens submitted for cytologic studies must be properly labeled with patient name and second patient identifier. Gynecologic smears may be spray-fixed or placed in Pap bottles with fixative. Surepath™ is utilized for the collection of liquid based gynecologic samples. Sputum for both malignant cells and *Pneumocystis jiroveci* must be collected as a fresh, unfixed specimen. Body cavity fluids are collected fresh, unfixed in a sterile container. If, at any time, a specimen is received in a condition which the medical director deems unsuitable, the specimen will be discarded. Specimens must be kept refrigerated if there will be a delay in delivering them to the laboratory.