

Document History:

Title: Handling and Transporting Histology and Cytology Specimens **Site(s):** Shared Health Diagnostic Services Provincial

Document #:	170-10-08	Version #:	05
Section:	Pathology	Subsection:	General

Approved by: (approval on file)	Dr. G. Fischer	Date:	4-FEB-2025
		Effective Date:	13-MAR-2025

Details of Recent Revision:

- New section 2.2 regarding support medium, subsequent sections renumbered.
- Section 3.2 – clarified “CLEAR 'zip lock type' specimen bag (no dark garbage bags)”
- Section 6.1.2 – added 'Note' that specimens should be considered as one case if they are collected at the same time and day during the same procedure

DISCLAIMER: Please be advised that printed versions of any policy, or policies posted on external web pages, may not be the most current version of the policy. Although we make every effort to ensure that all information is accurate and complete, policies are regularly under review and in the process of being amended and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of printed policies or policies on external web pages. At any given time, the most current version of any Shared Health Inc. policy will be deemed to apply. Users should verify that any policy is the most current policy before acting on it.

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To outline the procedure for transporting routine formalin fixed surgical (Histology) and Cytology specimens.
- 1.2 This procedure is intended to provide detailed information for sending sites to ensure sample integrity is maintained during shipping. The procedure also provides shipping /tracking documentation such as fax/fax back forms to ensure all irreplaceable specimens (histology and non-gyne cytology) are tracked during shipment.
- 1.3 Sites with Delphic LIS will track using Test referral/batcher sheets.

Note: The Pathology discipline is separated into several sections: This document pertains to Histology and Cytology.

Histology specimens are usually formalin fixed whereas cytology specimens may be sent fresh or with other preservatives (see SOP 170-110-87). The shipping requirements are similar but they require different absorbent material due to the fixatives used.

Cytology receives 2 types of specimens:

1. **Gynecological specimens** (Pap smears) Glass slides (rarely) or SurePath Collection Vials
2. **Non-Gynecological specimens** – fine needle aspirations, washings, brushings, sputum, urine and other body fluids.

2.0 POLICY

- 2.1 All shipments should be labeled according to TDG requirements: **Exempt Human Specimens.**
- 2.2 Tissue specimens should be placed/submerged directly into a specimen jar containing 10% neutral buffered formalin or on a Telfa™ pad. No other support medium is acceptable (no sponges, discs, gauze) as it can interfere with the quality of the specimen.
- 2.3 Formalin fixed Pathology specimens should be checked prior to shipping to ensure the ratio of formalin to tissue is at least 10:1 (ideally 20:1). If required 10% formalin should be added to the specimen.
 - 2.3.1 Adding 10% formalin to a container must be performed in a certified fume hood/near a bench sweep or back draft unit (or similar fume control device).
- 2.4 Tamper evident formalin containers should be used.
- 2.5 Separate procedures exist for non-routine specimens, including:
 - Lymphoma Protocol
 - Electron Microscopy
 - Hormone Receptors
 - Immunofluorescence
 - Large Surgical Specimens (Fresh)

Refer to <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/> Lab information manual under Medical Practitioners select Pathology under LIM, and use the Search for the required test.

Note:

1. 10% Neutral Buffered Formalin containers should be labeled with the appropriate formalin WHMIS label which should indicate that formalin is poisonous and carcinogenic.
2. Do not allow formalin fixed specimens to overheat or freeze.
3. When shipping fresh histology specimens or cytology specimens: Keep specimens cool using freezer packs wrapped in towels or diapers - **Do not** allow specimens to come in direct contact with the freezer packs.

3.0 MATERIALS/SUPPLIES

- 3.1 Leakproof Transportation containers (transport coolers), or leakproof transport cartons
- 3.2 CLEAR 'zip lock type' specimen bag with outer pocket (no dark garbage bags)
- 3.3 Sturdy plastic container with tight fitting lids
- 3.4 Large and small bags
- 3.5 Gloves (nitrile or similar)
- 3.6 Address labels
- 3.7 Transport labels stating:
 - Exempt Human Specimens
 - STAT Pathology (if specimen is a fresh specimen not in formalin).
- 3.8 TDG label-UN3334 Class 9 for formalin shipments (**Air only**)
- 3.9 Formalin neutralizing pads – Fan pad-GL® (or similar)
- 3.10 CytoLyt (Non-gyne) Store at room temperature.
- 3.11 SurePath Collection vial (Gyne) – store at room temperature
- 3.12 RPMI (see 4.6)
- 3.13 Sponge inserts for shipping containers

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 Unique identifier – a number that is unique to the individual patient such as the Personal Health Information Number (PHIN, Medical record number (MRN), Department of National Defense (DND) or (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) RCMP number.
Note Exception: MRN is not accepted as a patient identifier for cytology specimens as per SOP 10-50-03.
- 4.2 Transport containers (leakproof transport coolers /hard walled shipping cartons) – shipping containers with strap enclosures to ensure the cooler is secure, with Plexiglass sleeve or address label slot.
- 4.3 Labels – TDG label **Exempt Human Specimens**. **Note:** if shipping formalin by **Air** attach the UN 3334 tag to each shipping container.
- 4.4 Formalin Absorbent pad (GL fan pad or similar) – a pad which absorbs, contains and converts spilled aldehydes and eliminates hazardous vapors and hazardous liquid disposal. (Histology specimens only)
- 4.5 Absorbent pad – absorbent packing material for liquids which is placed into the secondary package (specimen bag), the absorbent material must be sufficient to absorb the entire contents of the primary specimen container in the event of leakage. (Cytology specimens)
- 4.6 RPMI – Roswell Park Memorial Institute culture media (tissue culture media)
- 4.7 Large Specimen–a surgical sample which does not fit in a routine container and/or cannot be placed into a large enough container to meet the required 10:1 formalin to tissue ratio

is shipped as a fresh specimen. (SOP 170-10-14) NOTE: if unsure, check the LIM for handling instructions. Most histology samples should be shipped in formalin to maintain specimen integrity.

Note: Fresh specimen shipments should be limited to extremely large cases, amputations (see 4.7), muscle biopsies and lymphoma cases. Lymphoma handling details are covered in SOP 170-10-11A.

5.0 SHIPPING REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 Fresh histology specimens (not in 10% neutral buffered formalin): keep cool using freezer packs (see Rural Transportation of Large Unfixed Surgical Specimens # 170-10-14 and Shipping and Handling Fresh Pathology Specimens-St. Boniface Hospital # 170-10-22).
Label with a Stat tag.
- 5.2 Fresh suspect lymphoma cases: Refer to Lymphoma Procedure – Rural and Non-Triaged Specimens #170-10-11 and 170-10-11A).
- 5.3 Histology specimens (in 10% neutral buffered formalin): Ship at room temperature-(do not freeze).
- 5.4 Cytology specimens: Keep cool using freezer packs-(do not freeze).
- 5.5 Pathology Laboratory Specimen Packaging and Shipment Reference: F170-10-08-Appendix 4 provides a quick reference guide.

Note: FOR SAFETY REASONS, when shipping specimens in **formalin** you must use a **formalin neutralizing absorbing pad** (fan pad-GL® or similar) which will absorb and neutralize the formaldehyde solution.

Absorbent material must be sufficient in quantity to completely absorb and neutralize the quantity of formalin being shipped (see fan pad types and absorbency below).

Fan Pad-GL® – Jones Scientific Products Inc. (or other vendor)

- Mini (55 sheets each) (each sheet absorbs approx 40 ml): H-FPM-CS
- Small (45 pads) (each sheet absorbs approx 300 ml): H-FPS-CS
- Large (30 pads) (each sheet absorbs approx 900 ml): H-FPL-CS

Do not use white absorbent packing material or blue diapers for formalin shipments as they do not neutralize formalin.

6.0 SHIPPING PROCESS

6.1 Sending Facility

Note: The sending facility must ensure all specimen and patient information is accurate and complete **prior** to shipping as per SOP 10-50-03.

All pathology requisitions must have a hand-written signature from the physician or designate who acknowledges that the specimen is from the patient indicated on the specimen container and matching requisition. If this is not present, it is up to the sending site to obtain this signature before sending the specimen to the lab where it will be worked up.

- 6.1.1 As per the specimen acceptance policy 10-50-03, match the first name, last name, and unique identifier on the specimen requisition to the first and last name and unique identifier on all accompanying pathology specimen containers.
- 6.1.2 Check to ensure that the number of specimens indicated on the requisition is the same as the number of specimen containers received.

Note: Specimens should be considered as one case if they are collected at the same time and day during the same procedure

- 6.1.3 Check to ensure that the specimen type and location stated on the requisition exactly matches the specimen type and locations listed on specimen containers.
- 6.1.4 Check to ensure the physician's name is on the requisition and the signature is hand-written on the line indicated for physician signature.
- 6.1.5 If any of the above information is incomplete or there are any discrepancies—immediately call the originating location (Operating Room, Radiology, CT, Day Surgery, Clinic, etc.) and ask them to complete the F10-50-03B as required.
- 6.1.6 The sending facility's Operating Room will fill out the date and time the specimen is removed from the patient and the time placed into formalin on all pathology requisitions.
- 6.1.7 If all information is complete, site will register specimens according to their site's pathology registration and receipting procedures (where applicable).
- 6.1.8 After registration: specimens are packaged according to specific instructions outlined in this document.

Note: Do not use parafilm to seal Histology or Cytology specimens.

Check that all lids are tight prior to shipping.

6.2 **Shipping Pathology Specimens (fixed tissues) in Formalin**

6.2.1 **Shipping by Air**

- 6.2.1.1 Shipping formalin fixed specimens by AIR requires additional placarding using the UN label pictured below.

Note: When transporting samples in formalin by **AIR**, attach the laminated UN label – UN3334 (using the miscellaneous Class 9 placard) on the cooler handle.



Attach the laminated label with a cord, string or elastic band to the shipping container prior to transporting formalin fixed Pathology samples.

6.2.2 **Shipping by Ground Transport** (Histology Specimens in formalin)

NOTE: Do not allow to freeze during winter transport

- 6.2.2.1 Package smaller specimen containers in plastic “ziplock type” specimen bags and seal the enclosure. Multiple Histology specimens collected from the same patient on the same collection day (e.g. 3 surgical pathology specimens from same collection date) must be shipped together in one bag with 1 requisition.
- 6.2.2.2 Larger specimens should be placed into a plastic bag and sealed.

- 6.2.2.3 Place the original requisition into the outside pocket of the “ziplock type” bag or place the requisition into a separate bag and attach to the specimen.
- 6.2.2.4 Ensure all lids are tightly seated and all bags are properly sealed in case the specimen container leaks. This way no liquid can permeate the requisition.
- 6.2.2.5 Line the shipping container with a large GL Fan pad ® or other formalin-neutralizing absorbent pad (the largest size absorbs 900 mL of formalin).

Note: For shipping large specimens (if the volume of formalin exceeds 900 mL), place a second formalin neutralizing absorbent pad) directly into the plastic bag with the specimen and tightly seal the bag with tape or elastics to ensure the formalin cannot seep out.

The formalin neutralizing absorbent should be able to absorb the entire amount of 10% formalin transported in the shipping container if a spill occurs.

- 6.2.2.6 Specimens **must** be kept upright during shipping.
 - 6.2.2.6.1 Place small specimens into foam inserts or use foam inserts to support the specimen containers (see Appendix 4).
 - 6.2.2.6.2 Use filler material when required to support large specimens to keep the specimen(s) upright during transport.
- 6.2.2.7 Place a shipping document into a plastic bag and place into the transport cooler (Shipping log, Batch list or other shipment list).
- 6.2.2.8 Close the lid and secure cooler straps, apply the appropriate address label or insert shipping address into the clear Plexiglass sleeve (where applicable).

6.3 Shipping complete amputations or other large FRESH histology specimens (not in formalin)

Note: Breast cases should be sent to the histology laboratory as soon as the surgery is complete. Rural sites-please ship in formalin to ensure specimen does not dry out excessively during transport.

- 6.3.1 If specimen is too large (see 4.7 for definition) then follow SOP 170-10-14.
- 6.3.2 If the specimens will not arrive at the referral site within the hour, ship large unfixed specimens with freezer packs wrapped in towels or diapers to keep cool during shipment.
- 6.3.3 If shipping complete amputations, ensure all patient information is accurate, requisition matches the specimen and all clinical information is written on the requisition. See Specimen Acceptance Policy # 10-50-03.
 - 6.3.3.1 Operating room staff (site specific) or designate is responsible for labeling and wrapping the limb in plastic to ensure the specimen is contained for shipping.
 - 6.3.3.2 The operating room or designate will wrap towels or diapers around any bony protuberances and wrap the limb to protect it during shipping.
 - 6.3.3.3 Staff will place the wrapped limb into a sturdy cardboard box.
 - 6.3.3.4 The box must be completely sealed using packing tape.
 - 6.3.3.5 The requisition is attached to the outside of the box and the box is labeled with the appropriate referral site’s shipping address.
 - 6.3.3.6 The operating room or designate delivers the specimen to the lab and places it into a designated area in the fridge.

- 6.3.4 Place a label on the top of the box beside the address label stating:

Exempt Human Specimen

This label must be removed if empty coolers are returned. It can be placed inside of the cooler to be reused when the coolers are refilled.

- 6.3.5 A Fresh specimen should be unpacked immediately. Place a second label called STAT or STAT PATHOLOGY if the cooler contains fresh specimens (Red Tag) to ensure that receiving site can identify priority cases.
- 6.3.6 Store fresh cases in the fridge and ship as soon as possible to the referral laboratory following the shipping procedures outlined in this document.

6.4 **Shipping Non-Gynecological Cytology Specimens (irreplaceable)**

- 6.4.1 Check to ensure the information on the requisition matches the specimen information as per specimen acceptance policy SOP10-50-03.
- 6.4.2 Multiple non-gyne specimens collected from the same patient (e.g. 3 urine specimens) must be shipped in “zip lock type” specimen bags with 3 separate requisitions. **Note:** Each non gyne cytology specimen must have its own separate cytology requisition. Physician’s signatures are preferred but not mandatory and will not be rejected on urine samples submitted to Cytology.
- 6.4.3 Always check the specimen container lids to ensure they are tightly sealed. **Do not** use parafilm to seal specimen containers. Non Gyne specimens are collected fresh or in CytoLyt as outlined in SOP 170-110-87. Fine Needle Aspiration specimens. If slides are shipped, the patient's last name **and** PHIN number or unique identifier **must** be printed on the frosted end of each slide. (see SOP#170-110-87).
- 6.4.4 Where applicable, register the specimen and place computer labels on the specimen and requisition.
- 6.4.5 Secure lids and place an absorbent material inside the plastic “zip lock type” specimen bag with the specimen and seal the enclosure.
- 6.4.6 Place the SH Non-Gynecological requisition into side pocket of the plastic “zip lock type” specimen bag.
- 6.4.7 Enclose a shipping document (Shipping log, Batch/Test Referral Log sheet).
- 6.4.8 Close the lid and secure cooler straps, apply the appropriate address label or insert shipping address into the clear Plexiglass sleeve.
- 6.4.9 If you are shipping immediately, place specimens into the transport container.
- 6.4.10 If you are not sending within the hour place specimens or the entire cooler into the fridge until courier arrives.

Note: Non Gyne-cytology specimens must be shipped in a primary leak proof specimen container with sufficient absorbent packing material in the specimen bag to absorb the entire contents of the specimen container if a spill occurs. Rural sites should keep these specimens cool using freezer packs (Do not freeze).

6.5 **Shipping Gynecological Cytology Specimen:**

- 6.5.1 **Liquid based PAP:** Place SurePath vial in “zip lock type” specimen bag with the requisition in the outer pocket.
- 6.5.2 **Conventional PAP:** place PAP smears (in plastic mailers) into “zip lock type” specimen bags with the requisition in the outer pocket. Tracking PAP smears is optional and dependent on-site specific policies.

Note: The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba has directed that the patient's PHIN must be written on ALL PAP smear slides. Guideline #1425 states that smears submitted without the patient's full name and PHIN on the slide cannot be accepted and must be destroyed.

6.5.3 Put the plastic bag with requisition and slides into the transport box and make sure the box is labeled correctly with the appropriate site address.

Note: store SurePath and CytoLyt WITHOUT specimens (empty) at room temperature.

6.6 **Scheduled shipments:**

Note: Sites with Delphic LIS will register samples as per SOP 170-10-02. In these cases, fax/fax back tracking is not required.

6.6.1 Include a shipping document outlining the contents of the shipment. For sites where Test Assign is not available; use LIS send list, shipping log or photocopied log book sheets.

6.6.2 It is the responsibility of the sending laboratory to notify the referral laboratory if a scheduled shipment is cancelled. The sending site will phone and fax using the Fax notification form (F170-10-08 Appendix 3).

6.6.3 It is the responsibility of the sending laboratory to notify the referral laboratory when sending samples outside of a scheduled run.

6.7 **Unscheduled shipments:**

6.7.1 Time sensitive, unscheduled or STAT shipments require advance notification. Depending on the specimen type-use the appropriate referral fax form from the appendices (F170-10-08 Appendix 1 or 2).

6.7.2 Attach **STAT** tag to handle using an elastic band to identify that the shipment is urgent.

6.7.3 **STAT/unscheduled shipment process:**

6.7.3.1 Contact the courier.

6.7.3.2 Complete the appropriate fax sheet for your referral site (see Appendices for forms)

6.7.3.3 Phone the referral site prior to shipping.

6.7.3.4 Fax the appropriate Appendix to the referral laboratory.

6.7.3.5 Include a shipping document or batcher list.

6.7.3.6 Place container in designated spot for pickup.

6.7.3.7 If shipping fresh/unfixed specimens be sure to place a **“STAT” or “STAT Pathology”** label onto the outer shipping package to ensure that the specimens do not sit unattended for an extended period of time in the referral facility's receiving area.

6.8 **Referral laboratory (receiving facility)**

It is the responsibility of the referral laboratory to follow up if a shipment does not arrive.

6.8.1 Cancelled scheduled runs: the referral lab will receive a phone call and Fax notification to indicate that the regular run was cancelled. The sending site will use form F170-10-08 (Appendix 3).

- 6.8.2 The receiving site is responsible for ensuring that specimens and patient information in all shipments match the number of samples and patient information provided on the Referral Log, Shipment lists or batcher/test assign lists. Any discrepancies should be corrected immediately.
- 6.8.3 The specimens are checked for accuracy as per Specimen Acceptance Policy #10-50-03.
- 6.8.4 When the sample is received at the referral lab, the site will remove the laminated address label and place back into the Plexiglass sleeve with the return address visible (if using this type of transport container). This ensures the sending site will get their transport containers returned to their site.
 - 6.8.4.1 Any formalin absorbent pads, unless soiled, foam inserts and any other packing material should be returned to the sending site in the transport container.
 - 6.8.4.2 Any STAT tags, Human Exempt tags or Class 9 (UN 3334) tags should also be removed and placed into the empty transport container to return to the originating location.
- 6.8.5 The Referral Logs (Appendices) should have been faxed prior to shipping.
- 6.8.6 NOTE: this only applies if sample is not registered in Delphic LIS. Registered cases are tracked as per SOP 170-10-06. The receiving site must complete and fax a copy of the Referral Log back to the original sending facility within 24 hours or 48 hours if shipped over the weekend, indicating that all of the specimens have been received.

Note: The last column on the fax/fax back form does not replace the specimen acceptance policy form for mislabeled or unacceptable specimen quality tracking.

- 6.8.7 The sending facility must contact the referral lab if they do not receive the Referral Log fax back within 24 hours or 48 hours if shipped over the weekend.
- 6.8.8 Any issues that arise with shipping pathology specimens must be dealt with immediately. See Lost or Missing Specimen Policy #100-10-23.
- 6.8.9 The specimens are receipted and processed at the referral lab, following the same procedure as outlined in 6.1.1 to 6.1.7. Check the shipment against the shipping document and the fax sheet to ensure ALL specimens listed are received and make comments on any discrepancies on the fax form.

7.0 **CONTACT INFORMATION-Referral Laboratories:**

- 7.1 **Health Sciences Centre**
Pathology Laboratory
 MS459 -820 Sherbrook Street
 Thorlakson Building
 Winnipeg, MB R3A 1R9
 Ph: (204) 787-4611 or 787-2036
 Fax: (204) 787-8914
 Off hours paging: 787-2071
- 7.2 **Health Sciences Centre**
Cytology Laboratory
 MS337 -820 Sherbrook Street
 Thorlakson Building
 Winnipeg, MB R3A 1R9

Ph: (204) 787-1352
Fax: (204) 787-1790 office or (204) 787-8914 for cutting room

7.3 St. Boniface General Hospital

Pathology Laboratory
L1211 - 409 Tache Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2H 2A6
Ph: (204) 237-2490
Fax: (204) 235-3423

7.4 St. Boniface General Hospital

Cytology Laboratory
L1218 - 409 Tache Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2H 2A6
Ph: (204) 237-2490
Fax: (204) 235-3423

7.5 Westman Laboratory

Pathology Department
1-150 McTavish Avenue E.
Brandon, MB R7H 7H8
Ph: (204) 578-4463 (spec. management)
or Histology Charge Technologist: (204) 578-4476
Fax: (204) 578-2813
Cytology Charge Technologist: (204) 578-4468

8.0 SAFETY

- 8.1 Remove and replace the Fan Pads-GL® or sponges if they are visibly soiled or wet from a formalin spill.
- 8.2 Use local exhaust ventilation to control the emissions (fume hood or bench sweeps), A fume hood should be used for dispensing formalin.
- 8.3 Use caution and wear impermeable (nitrile or similar) gloves when handling specimens in formalin.
- 8.4 Wear nitrile gloves (or similar), lab coat and chemical safety goggles and/or a full-face shield where splashing is possible when handling formalin.

9.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- 9.1 #170-10-14, Rural Transportation of Large Fresh Surgical Specimens to Referral SH Pathology Sites
- 9.2 #170-10-15, Rural/ Northern Transportation of Routine Surgical Specimens to Referral SH Pathology Sites (Archived 2012)
- 9.3 #100-10-23, Lost or Missing Specimen Policy
- 9.4 #100-10-25, Referring Specimen to Referral Laboratories using Delphic LIS application

10.0 REFERENCES

- 10.1 Transportation of Dangerous Goods Guidelines
- 10.2 College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba Guidelines;
Statement No. 1425 - Cytology Standards of Accreditation, <http://www.cpsm-secure.com/statements/1425.php>

Appendix 1 Surgical Histology Specimen Referral Log _____
(referral laboratory name)

Procedure:

1. Sending facility will fax specimen referral log to the referral lab prior to shipping specimens.
2. Within 48 hours of receiving fax, the referral lab will match and record receipt of specimens and fax the same sheet back to Sending Facility with notification that specimens were received.

To be completed by Sending Facility: Shipment Date: _____

Facility Name: _____ Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

Sender (print name): _____ Courier Name/Waybill #: _____

Fax Completed form to: _____ FAX (204) _____ Phone: (204) _____
(referral laboratory)

Patient Name	PHIN #	Specimen Type	Number of Containers	Received/ comments

To be completed by the Referral laboratory:

Documentation of Receipt of Specimens:

Date/Time-Specimens Received: _____ Receiver (print name): _____

Return Faxing Date and Time: _____

Appendix 2 Cytology Specimen Referral Log _____
(referral laboratory name)

Procedure:

1. Sending facility will fax specimen referral log to the referral lab prior to shipping specimens.
2. Within 48 hours of receiving fax, the referral Cytology lab will match and record receipt of specimens and fax same sheet back to Sending Facility with notification that specimens were received.

To be completed by Sending Facility: Shipment Date: _____

Facility Name: _____ Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

Sender (print name): _____ Courier Name/Waybill #: _____

Fax Completed form to Referral Cytology Laboratory FAX (204) _____

Phone: (204) _____

Patient Name	PHIN #	Specimen Type	Number of Containers	Received/ comments

To be completed by the Referral laboratory:

Documentation of Receipt of Specimens:

Date/Time-Specimens Received: _____ Receiver (print name): _____

Return Faxing Date and Time: _____

Appendix 3 Cancelled Scheduled Shipment*To be completed by the Sending Laboratory:*

Sending Site Name: _____

Date: _____

Name of person contacted by phone to notify of cancelled shipment:
_____**To: (Referral Laboratory)**

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| ☐ Health Sciences Centre Pathology | Fax# (204) 787-8914 |
| ☐ Health Sciences Centre Cytology | Fax# (204) 787-1790 |
| ☐ St. Boniface Hospital Pathology/Cytology | Fax# (204) 235-3423 |
| ☐ Westman Laboratory Pathology/Cytology | Fax# (204) 578-2813 |

Please note that our site will not be sending our scheduled shipment.**(Circle: AM or PM)**

To be completed by the Referral Laboratory:

Fax received (date/time/initials):

Date/time: _____ Initials of recipient: _____

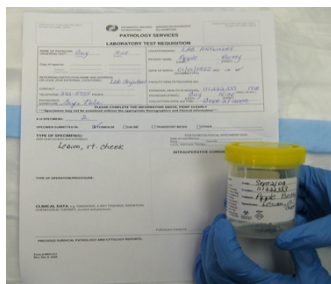
Appendix 4

Pathology Laboratory Specimen Packaging and Shipment Guide

The shipment of specimens from collection site to testing site must follow Transportation of Dangerous Goods Guidelines (TDG). Human exempt specimens are not subject to the regulations if specimens are placed into packaging which will prevent any leakage and which is marked and shipped accordingly.

The following conditions must be met in order to comply with this exemption:

Watertight Primary Container; Watertight Secondary Container; Absorbent Material –use formalin neutralizing absorbent pads if shipping formalin fixed specimens; Strong leak-proof outer packaging- transportation container, appropriate package labeling



Watertight Primary Container

- Verify specimen is labeled identically to patient information on requisition as per SH Specimen Acceptance Policy 10-50-03.
- Specimen type should match the specimen type on the requisition; the site should indicate the time placed into Formalin on the requisition.
- Rectify any discrepancies prior to packaging.
- Inspect all primary containers to ensure lids are tightened and sealed to prevent leakage.

Do not use parafilm to seal containers.



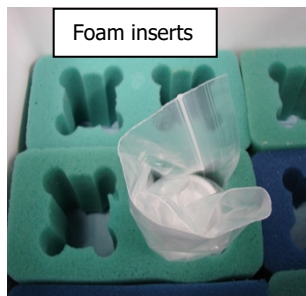
Watertight Secondary Container

- Place liquid specimens, including specimens shipped in formalin, into a "ziplock type" or large sealed bag.
- Place requisition(s) into the outer plastic sleeve/separate plastic bag to provide separation of requisition(s) from specimen(s) in case a specimen leaks.
- Multiple Histology samples collected from the same patient on the same collection day with 1 requisition (e.g., 3 surgical pathology specimens from same collection date) must be shipped together in one bag.
- Ensure all requisitions are complete (including date and time placed into formalin, physician's signature, etc) prior to shipping.

Formalin neutralizing pads



Foam inserts



Specimens kept upright



Sturdy leak-proof shipping container



Absorbent Material and Strong Outer Packaging

- Place a **large** formalin neutralizing pad in the bottom of the transport container. (Absorbent material must be sufficient to absorb entire contents in case of leakage).
- Formalin-neutralizing pads must be placed in shipping container when shipping formalin fixed histology specimens. Large specimens with >900 mL of formalin may require a second neutralizing pad.
- ALL formalin fixed specimens must be kept upright using foam inserts or other packing material in the shipping container.
- Transport containers must be leak-proof and strong enough to withstand the shocks normally encountered during transport.

Rural Surgical Pathology Specimens: Notify testing facility that specimens are being shipped by completing and faxing the appropriate Specimen Referral Log.

Labeling and Marking Outer Package

- Place address label on outside of package. Address must include name, address and phone number of both sender and receiver.
 - If applicable, complete and place courier waybill on outside of package.
 - Place a **"Human Exempt Specimens"** label on outside of package.
 - If you are shipping fresh histology or urgent cytology specimens please indicate **"STAT"** by placing an additional label on the outside of the transport container.
 - The leak-proof shipping container should be closed and secured with either straps or shipping tape.
- Complete any necessary shipping record that may be required (within your own facility). When the package is ready for shipment include a copy of a shipment log to indicate the contents of the shipment (batcher sheets/test assign sheets, AP run logs, shipment list, etc).

Histology specimens should be kept at room temperature or shipped with cooler packs to maintain a temperature of 4° C during summer months. Cytology specimens-keep refrigerated. Do not allow pathology specimens to freeze during transport.