

Document History:

Title: Rural Transport of Large Fresh Surgical Samples to Referral Shared Health Pathology Sites

Site(s): Shared Health Diagnostic Services Provincial

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Section:	Pathology	Subsection:	General
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Details of Recent Revision

- Multiple edits throughout document
- Removed labelling instructions from 5.0 and 6.0 and made it its own section – 7.0 Labelling the Plastic Container or Box; subsequent sections renumbered
- 7.1 Place a label on the top of the boxed beside the address label stating:
STAT FRESH SPECIMEN
Exempt Human Specimen
- New section: 8.0 Selection and Notification Process to SH Pathology Lab; subsequent sections renumbered
- Revision to 9.1
- Section 10.0 – updated HSC Charge Tech numbers; moved Selkirk from SBH to WRL

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1.0 **PURPOSE**

To provide a safe and secure procedure to facilitate the transportation of large, **fresh** surgical specimens from rural hospitals to SH Pathology sites.

Rationale: The rural hospitals do not have access to large quantities of formalin; therefore, they are not equipped to triage, open and fix large specimens on site. This applies to colon resection, hysterectomy specimens and amputations, etc.

2.0 **POLICY**

All large surgical specimens (in container or box) should be sent **fresh/chilled** utilizing freezer packs for receipt within 24-48 hours to referral Pathology site using the appropriate transportation coolers (shipping within 24 hours is preferable).

- **Fresh Breast cases** should be shipped in formalin to prevent dry out and transported immediately to the nearest Pathology referral site. Delayed fixation can have an adverse affect on the immunohistochemistry results.
- Operating rooms should indicate the time the specimen was removed from the patient (ischemic time) on the Pathology requisition. DO NOT ship fresh unless directed by SH Pathology referral lab.
- See JA170-81-05 Handling Fresh Breast Specimens if further details required.

3.0 **MATERIALS**

3.1 Large transport container (shipping cooler -approx. 13 x 24 x 15") with 2 attached security straps.

3.1.1 Each large cooler should contain the following supplies:

- Six (6) **frozen** freezer packs
- Seven (7) absorbent diapers
- One (1) sealable plastic storage container (16x11x6") – which must seal tightly
- Two (2) Biohazard Material bags
- One (1) plastic sealable envelope for requisitions
- Address labels for Westman, St Boniface and Health Sciences Centre

Note – Sending Facility:

*Ensure that you have the appropriate transportation cooler available. If not, contact the pathology lab: Westman (WL) Laboratory, St Boniface (SBH) or Health Sciences Centre (HSC).

*Ensure that you have 6 frozen freezer packs available.

4.0 **DEFINITIONS**

4.1 Large Specimen – A surgical sample which does not fit in a routine container and/or cannot be appropriately fixed in a minimum of 10:1 ratio of formalin to specimen (20:1 ratio is preferred and will provide the most ideal fixation). If unsure, check the LIM for handling instructions. Most histology samples should be shipped in formalin to maintain specimen integrity. Fresh specimen shipments should be limited to extremely large cases, amputations, and muscle biopsies. Lymphoma handling details are covered in SOP 170-10-11.

4.2 Appropriate Shipping Container – A cooler which is sealed and will be able to maintain the specimen at approximately 4°C during transport.

- 4.3 Sending Facility – Site which procures a specimen and ships it off-site to a different facility for processing.
- 4.4 Referral Laboratory (SH Pathology Receiving Site) – Site which receives and processes the specimen from the sending facility.
- 4.5 10% Neutral Buffered Formalin – A fixative routinely used in Histology laboratories to preserve the microanatomical structures of tissues.
- 4.6 Biohazard Material Bags - Biohazard bags denoted with a  symbol.

5.0 SPECIMENS THAT FIT INTO PLASTIC CONTAINERS

- 5.1 Where applicable, register the specimen and place computer labels on the specimen and requisition.
- 5.2 Check to ensure the pathology information on the requisition matches the specimen as per SOP 10-50-03, Specimen Acceptance Policy. It is the responsibility of the sending site to ensure that the information on the container and requisition are correct BEFORE sending the specimen to the lab where it will be worked up.
- 5.3 Place pathology specimen in double biohazard material bag provided. Seal bag with tape.
- 5.4 Line bottom of sealable plastic container with absorbent diaper.
- 5.5 Place specimen inside of smaller sealable, plastic container. Lay specimen as flat as possible.
- 5.6 Place lid on plastic container. Ensure seal is tight.
- 5.7 Prepare hard walled cooler by lining bottom of cooler with absorbent diaper.
- 5.8 Place frozen ice packs on bottom of diaper lined, hard walled cooler.
- 5.9 Cover frozen ice packs with absorbent diapers.
- 5.10 Place sealed plastic container with specimen upright into cooler.
- 5.11 Make sure that lid is secured.
Use filler material when required to support large specimens to keep the specimen upright during transport.
- 5.11.1 Keep specimens cool during summer months by shipping with cooler packs as per SOP# 170-10-08.
- 5.12 Place specimen requisition into plastic envelope provided and place into cooler.
- 5.13 Close hard walled cooler and tighten outer attached security straps.
- 5.14 Arrange for Courier pickup. Place address label, STAT FRESH SPECIMEN/Exempt Human tissue label, and Courier waybill on the top of hard walled cooler.
- 5.15 Fill out “**STAT PATHOLOGY** Specimen Referral Log” and follow instructions under section 7.0 Pathology Site Selection and Notification Process.

6.0 SPECIMENS TOO LARGE TO FIT INTO PLASTIC CONTAINERS/LIMB AMPUTATION

- 6.1 Where applicable, register the specimen and place computer labels on the specimen and requisition.
- 6.2 Check to ensure the pathology information on the requisition matches the specimen as per SOP 10-50-03, Specimen Acceptance Policy. It is the responsibility of the sending site to ensure that the information on the container and requisition are correct **BEFORE** sending the specimen to the lab where it will be worked up.
- 6.3 Operating room staff (site specific) or designate is responsible for labeling and wrapping the limb to ensure the specimen is contained for shipping. The operating room or designate will wrap towels or diapers around any boney protuberances and wrap the limb in double plastic bags to protect it during shipping. Patient ID should be on outermost bag.

- 6.4 Staff will place the wrapped limb into a sturdy cardboard box with freezer packs wrapped in towels or diapers to keep cool during shipment. Keep specimens cool during summer months by shipping with cooler packs as per SOP# 170-10-08.
- 6.5 Use filler material when required to support large specimens to keep the specimen upright during transport.
- 6.6 The box must be completely sealed using packing tape.
- 6.7 The requisition is placed in an envelope and is attached to the outside of the box. Be sure to conceal the specimen patient identification label so no patient information is visible.
- 6.8 Keep specimen in fridge/cool until courier pickup.
- 6.9 Arrange for Courier pickup. Place address label, **STAT FRESH SPECIMEN**/Exempt Human Tissue label, and Courier waybill on the top of the box.
- 6.10 Fill out "**STAT PATHOLOGY** Specimen Referral Log" and follow instructions under section 7.0 Pathology Site Selection and Notification Process.

7.0 **LABELLING THE PLASTIC CONTAINER OR BOX**

- 7.1 Place a label on the top of the cooler or box beside the address label stating:

STAT FRESH SPECIMEN
Exempt Human Specimen

Note: this tag needs to be removed when coolers are empty.

- 7.2 Place SH Pathology Site address label on the top of the cooler or box.
- 7.3 Tape envelope with requisition to box (or inside cooler in plastic bag).
- 7.4 Place courier waybill on cooler or box.
- 7.5 Store in fridge/keep cool until pickup.

Note: During the week (Monday–Friday) samples should be shipped to SBH and Westman Laboratory.
Samples transported to Health Sciences Centre are delivered Monday to Friday after 5:00 p.m. to the sample receiving area on the 5th Floor in the Thorlakson Building (**MS559**).

8.0 **SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS TO SH PATHOLOGY LAB**

- 8.1 Refer to section 9.0 Pathology Referral Site Information for shipping sites and contact numbers.
- 8.2 Receiving facility must be notified by phone and fax (Appendix 1) to expect the shipment of a fresh surgical specimen.
- 8.3 If sending facility does not have the appropriate cooler for sending large, fresh surgical specimens, contact the referral site for shipping instructions.
- 8.4 Ensure shipping instruction is adhered to. Deviations may result in the compromise of specimen integrity (i.e. loss of cellular detail, autolysis, etc.).
- 8.5 Complete the "**STAT PATHOLOGY** Specimen Referral Log" (Appendix 1) if the specimen is fresh.
- 8.6 Notify Pathology Referral site that will be receiving the specimen by phone (Appendix 1) and fax the completed "**STAT PATHOLOGY** Specimen Referral Log" to the referral site (refer to section 9.0 PATHOLOGY REFERRAL SITE INFORMATION).
- 8.7 Attach "**STAT**" label and **FRESH SPECIMEN**" to the outside of the cooler to ensure it is opened immediately upon receipt at the referral lab.
- 8.8 Pathology Referral Site will acknowledge receiving specimen by faxing back the Fresh Surgical Specimen Referral Log to the sending facility immediately upon receipt.

- 8.9 **CRITICAL:** If expected specimens are not received, the sending facility must be contacted **IMMEDIATELY** and both sites will initiate tracking of specimens.

Note: If the sending facility procures a specimen during off hours (i.e., during a holiday weekend) or when the specimen will not reach the Referral site within 24-48 hours, normal transportation modes may not be available.

In these cases, volunteer drivers may be utilized to transport specimens and it may be more economically feasible and timely to transport specimen to the nearest Pathology Referral site (Health Sciences Centre).

9.0 **PROCEDURE NOTES – Health Sciences Centre**

- 9.1 During off hours and on occasions where the specimen is travelling on a Friday afternoon with a volunteer driver, the specimen can be transported to Health Sciences Centre.
- 9.1.1 Call the HSC Switchboard (204)787-2071 To have the resident on call paged.
- 9.2 To contact specimen receiving (5th floor), phone (204) 787-1534 and indicate on Appendix 1 who was notified and the time.
- 9.2.1 ALL information in Appendix 1 must be completed by the sending facility.
- 9.3 The surgical staff or designate (originator) will package the specimens according to procedural instructions and ship directly to referral/ receiving site.
- 9.4 Fax Appendix 1 to the receiving site and keep the original for filing.
- 9.5 The referral/receiving site will sign and fax the tracking form back to the originating site immediately upon receipt.

Note:

1. All unfixed specimens should be labeled “**STAT**” or “**FRESH SPECIMEN**” to ensure coolers are handled immediately.
2. Please ensure that shipping instructions are adhered to. Deviations from the shipping procedure will result in possible damage, and rejection. All issues are tracked.

Critical point: If specimens are lost, the referral/ receiving site will notify the originator and the investigation will be started from both ends. See SOP #100-10-23 Lost or Missing Specimen Policy.

10.0 Pathology Referral Site Information

Westman Regional Laboratory	Health Sciences Centre	St. Boniface Hospital
Sites: Ste. Anne Boundary Trails The Pas Neepawa Swan River Minnedosa Flin Flon Portage la Prairie Dauphin Selkirk (exception: Breast resection)	Sites: Thompson	Sites: Bethesda Regional Health Center Beausejour Desalaberry Gimli Hunter Memorial Kin Place Lac Du Bonnet Lakeshore Health Mount Carmel Clinic Pine Falls Pinawa Selkirk (only breast resection specimens) St. Anne Hospital Stonewall
Phone Contact Specimen Management:204-578-4463 Charge Technologist:204-578-4476 Pathology Assistants:204-578-4477 Off Hour Paging:204-578-4000 Westman Laboratory Pathology / Cytology.....Fax# (204) 578-2819	Phone Contact Pathology Supervisor:204-787-8893 Charge Technologist:204-787-1508 or 204-787-1520 Pathology Assistants:204-787-4611 Off Hour Paging:204-787-2071 Health Sciences Centre Pathology (Note: Off hour paging will reach the resident. Inform them of the expected time of arrival of the specimen.)	Phone Contact Pathology Supervisor:204-793-3250 Charge Technologist:204-235-3346 Pathology Assistants:204-235-3763 Off Hour Paging:204-787-7243 user 0266
Address: Westman Laboratory Pathology Department 1-150 McTavish Avenue E. Brandon MB R7A 7H8	Address: Health Sciences Centre Pathology Laboratory MS459 Thorlakson Building 820 Sherbrook Street Winnipeg MB R3A 2R9	Address: St. Boniface Hospital, Pathology L1202 – 409 Tache Avenue Winnipeg, MB R2H 2A6 Phone: 204-237-2490 Fax: 204-235-3423

Note: If specimens are delivered to HSC after 5:00 PM, Monday-Friday, they are to be taken to the "Sample Receiving area" on the 5th floor (MS559) in the Thorlakson building.

Appendix 1: STAT PATHOLOGY Specimen Referral Log _____
(referral laboratory name)

Procedure:

1. Sending facility will fax specimen referral log to the referral lab prior to shipping specimens.
2. Label the shipping container "**Exempt Human Specimen**" and STAT or STAT PATHOLOGY
3. Within 48 hours of receiving fax, the Pathology 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:

Facility Name: _____ Shipment Date: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

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

Fax Completed form to Referral Laboratory: FAX: (204) _____ Phone: (204) _____

Patient Name	PHIN #	Date/Time Collected	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: _____