**CHILTON MEDICAL CENTER Anatomical Pathology Specimens**

All specimens must be labeled with patient’s name, hospital number, room number, date and type of specimen contained and accompanied by a “Request for Surgical Pathology and Non-Gyn Cytopathology” (CH Graphics Arts #110-001 R0609) unless otherwise designated. One form must be filled out for each specimen or group of specimens. This form must contain the following information:

* Patient Information (from patient label) including full name (first and last), date of birth, and medical record number
* Ordering physician
* History and/or pre-op diagnosis
* Specimen(s) removed
* Post-operative diagnosis if available
* Date of service
* Test requested

The properly labeled specimen container must be placed in a plastic bag with proper request form and be delivered to the laboratory. To avoid leakage, be sure container(s) is closed tightly.

Most specimens are placed in10% formalin. (See specific specimen listed below.) Containers with formalin are available in the Histology Laboratory.

Specimens submitted fresh must be handed to a person. If there is no one in Pathology Laboratory, hand deliver specimen to Clinical Lab Accession Area. Label both the specimen and the request form with a “Fresh Specimen” label.

**Autopsy Process**

An autopsy will be performed on any hospital patient (including Emergency Department) at the discretion of the pathologist if requested by the attending physician or the patient’s family. There must be a signed, valid consent form and, and, if applicable, a release from the Medical Examiner's Office. A valid consent is required for a fetal autopsy over the age of 20 weeks gestation.

Question #2 on the “Discharge Report-Fatal Case Form” must be answered, i.e., Is this a Medical Examiner’s Case?

If the answer is yes, the Medical Examiner must be contacted. Cases accepted by the Medical Examiner will not be performed at Chilton Medical Center. They will be performed at the Medical Examiner’s facility.

In potential Medical Examiner cases, the family should not be asked to authorize an autopsy until the Medical Examiner releases the body.

In all other situations, (when the patient does not die in the hospital), if an autopsy is requested, the pathologist will determine if the autopsy will be performed at Chilton Hospital. In this case, the pathologist will determine if it is a private autopsy or a hospital autopsy. There is no charge for a hospital autopsy.

A hospital and pathologist charge will be applied for a private autopsy. The family will normally incur the charge for a private autopsy.

Guidelines for cases considered hospital autopsies:

* Patient has recently been an inpatient at Chilton Medical Center and dies at home, in a nursing home, or in transit to Chilton Medical Center; and the attending physician requests and autopsy.
* If the autopsy cannot be done at Chilton Medical Center, the laboratory will provide a list of pathologists who are available to perform private autopsies.

Also see Nursing Policies:

* Autopsy Permits
* Autopsy Policy for Non-Inpatients
* Notification of Medical Examiner
* Post-Mortem Procedure
* Reportable Police Cases

**Note:** Located on the S:// drive under Policies Procedures and Standards

**Breast Biopsy/Tissue that may need Prognostic Factors**

The time the specimen is collected and time placed in fixative (formalin) must be recorded on the requisition.

**Bronchial Brushing**

* Directly brush a suspect area with a nylon brush
* Rinse the brush in Cytolyt® to preserve the cellular material
* Label site of procurement, right and left, and bronchial branches

**Bronchial Washing**

* Wash the brushed site and surrounding areas with saline
* Aspirate the saline by the use of gentle suction through the bronchoscope
* Label site of procurement, right and left, and bronchial branches

**Calculi**

* Fresh specimen – no formalin

**Colonic Fluids:**

* Not done–discuss with Pathologist

**Cytogenetics**

* Fresh specimen – no formalin
* Refrigerate once in lab

**Electron Microscopy**

* Specimens are to be fresh or soaked in normal saline
* Must arrive by 2pm Monday through Thursday only, and not on holidays or the day before a holiday.

**Fine Needle Aspirates**

* Use a pencil to label the slide with patient’s name
* Prepare slides by pressing the specimen on the right side of the slide and spray immediately with Cyto-Fix and/or fix slices in 95% alcohol
* Rinse aspirated material into a tube or container of Cytolyt®

**Flow Cytometry**

* Fresh Specimen–no fixative, or blood collected in a lavender top (EDTA) tube.
* Notify Pathology that the specimen will be coming to the laboratory, Monday through Friday, 5a.m. to 4 p.m. Off hours, notify laboratory technician
* Patient history and patient’s diagnosis is required

**Flow Cytometry-DNA Histogram-Bladder Washings**

* Call laboratory 1 day before scheduled procedure to arrange specimen pickup
* Required–200mL to 400 mL of sterile saline washings in a sterile container
* Paperwork should include a “Request for Surgical Pathology and Non-Gyn Cytopathology” (CH Graphics Arts # 110-001 R0609) and a “Laboratory Miscellaneous Form” (CH Graphics Arts #110-10) sent with the specimen

**Frozen Section Specimens**

* Fresh specimen–no fixative
* Whenever possible, the frozen section will be scheduled in advance
* Specimen must be handed to a histotech or pathologist and accompanied by a completed “Intraoperative Consultation Form” (CH Graphics Arts #110-007 R0804)

**Gastric Fluids:**

* Lavage can be accepted–discuss with Pathologist at ext. 5046

**Gyn Specimens for PAP (Papanicolaou) Smears**

* Test is orderable in HIS (THINPREP). Specimens are sent to Atlantic Consolidated Laboratory (ACL)
* Liquid–based preparation (i.e. Thin Prep®) is the preferred method (available from Send Out Department)
* Follow manufacturer’s instructions

**Note:** Complete and submit “Gyn-Cytology Request Form (p.912). It is essential that history be included and specimen source must be documented as cervical or vaginal.

**Immunofluorescence**

* Call the laboratory 1 day before scheduled procedure to arrange specimen pickup and delivery to an outside laboratory
* Fresh tissue in saline-soaked gauze and place on ice
* Hand deliver to technician

**NOTE:** Tissue may be delivered from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, unless approval is given by pathologist, and not on holidays or the day before a holiday.

**Lymph Nodes**

* Check with surgeon or pathologist if specimen(s) should be sent to laboratory fresh or in formalin.
* Monday through Friday preferred if special studies (i.e. Flow Cytometry) necessary for lymphoma work-up.

**Muscle Biopsy**

Schedule with Pathology Laboratory at least 1 day prior to procedure. Specimens are sent to MAYO and are accepted only Monday through Thursday, 9a.m. to noon, and not on a holiday or the day before the holiday.

The muscle should be carefully selected according to the following guidelines:

* In acute and subacute conditions, the most affected muscle should be biopsied. In chronic disease processes, a moderately affected muscle should be biopsied rather than those that are severely affected. It is preferable to biopsy those muscles in which fiber type distribution have been established.
* Muscles with a recent history of trauma, including electromyogram needle insertion and intramuscular infection should be avoided.
* The biopsy should be taken from an area of muscle away from the musculotendinous junction.

The muscle biopsy should be taken with great care to avoid any excess mechanical trauma to the specimen, to maintain the orientation of the muscle fibers, and to prevent the contraction of the biopsied muscle. Muscle clamps are not to be used. The following should be observed:

* When infiltrating the skin with a local anesthetic (without epinephrine), it is important to avoid infiltrating the muscle itself.
* Following blunt dissection, a cigar shaped strip of muscle at least 2.5 cm long and 1.0 cm wide should be removed with minimal handling.
* Do not tie the muscle to a tongue depressor or any other object.

The biopsied muscle should be wrapped in saline-moistened gauze, delivered to laboratory immediately and handed to a technician.

**Nerve Biopsy**

Schedule with Pathology Laboratory at least 1 day prior to procedure. Specimens are sent to MAYO and are accepted only Monday through Thursday, 9a.m. to noon, and not on a holiday or the day before the holiday.

The biopsied nerve should be wrapped in saline-moistened gauze, delivered to laboratory immediately and handed to a technician.

**Non-Gyn Cytopathology & Cell Block**

To avoid possible specimen rejection, fluid for cytology and cellblock must be submitted to the Laboratory as follows:

All specimens must be properly labeled with:

* Patient’s full name (first and last)
* Patient’s date of birth
* Patient’s medical record number
* Date and time of collection
* Ordering physician
* Source of specimen and manner of collection.
* Test requested

“Request for Surgical Pathology & Non-Gyn Cytopathology” (CH Graphics Arts #110-001 R0609) must be completed. It is essential that a brief history be included on this form. Specimen should be placed in an equal amount of cyolyt or no fixative and brought to the Lab. Hand deliver **to a technician** within 30 minutes of collection. Cytolyt® is available from the laboratory.

**Peritoneal Fluid Pleural Fluid, Pericardial Fluid**

* No preparation–bring to the lab immediately and hand deliver to a technician to be refrigerated.

**Spinal Fluid**

* No preparation–bring to laboratory immediately and hand deliver to a technician

**Note:** Spinal fluid testing cannot be performed if the patient has suspected or confirmed transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) such as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease), or scrapie.

**Sputum**

* Expectorated into 50% alcohol–available from laboratory
* **Early-morning** specimens yield the greatest number of diagnostic cells
* If ordered times 3–collect on 3 consecutive days

**Tissue and Bone Marrow Specimens**

Place specimen in 10% formalin. Volume of formalin should be approximately 10 times the tissue volume. If slides are prepared, place them in cardboard slide holder (supplied by laboratory). Label each slide with patient’s name (use pencil).

**Urine**

* Random urine, but not **first-morning** specimen.
* Immediately place in 50% alcohol–available from laboratory
* If ordered times 3--collect on 3 consecutive days
* Indicate date and time collected on the label–especially necessary if there will be a series of specimens
* **Specimen will not be accepted if above procedure is not followed**