



Veterinary Diagnostic Pathology Services

Submission Guidelines for Histopathology Samples

All specimens should be fixed in at least 10 x tissue volume of 10% neutral buffered formalin in a sealed screw-top container. Identifiers e.g. owner name and animal name should be written on the sample pot to allow identification and where multiple sites or tissues are sampled, these should also be indicated to correlate with information you provide on the submission form. **Secure packaging is a legal requirement for posting samples to us.**

Current guidance from the Department of Transport can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/287775/guidance-note-17.pdf

Please ensure that the sample pot is enclosed in a sealed plastic bag that includes sufficient absorbent material to soak up any leakages in the event of breakage in transit. Finally place this bag in a padded envelope, plastic or cardboard box and post ideally for **next day delivery** to the following address:

**Veterinary Pathology Centre
University of Surrey
Francis Crick Road
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 7AQ**

Delivery of Samples

A postage address label can be downloaded here

http://www.surreyvetpathology.com/sites/default/files/documents/VPC_Postage_Label.pdf

For local practitioners we also have a sample drop-box located outside the Veterinary Pathology Centre at the above address. Please call 01483 689823 or email vetpath@surrey.ac.uk to arrange access if required.

Turn-around time (TAT)

We aim to report most biopsy samples within 2-3 working days from date of receipt. Some larger samples that may need additional fixation or those requiring decalcification may take longer. If we anticipate time to reporting exceeding 4 days from receipt we will inform you.

Large and Complex Samples

For large samples we recommend fixation in 10% neutral buffered formalin at the practice prior to despatch to avoid transporting large volumes of formalin through the post. To aid fixation of large masses partial parallel incisions can be made at about 2cm intervals. This keeps the masses and their surgical margins intact whilst allowing good penetration of fixative. For skin masses please incise from the skin surface to preserve the integrity of the surgical margins for histological sampling. Once fixed, remove the sample from the formalin and place in a sealable plastic bag. Then double bag and include sufficient absorbent material to accommodate any leakage of residual formalin from the inner bag. Finally, package the specimen securely in a suitably sturdy plastic or cardboard box for posting.

For complex specimens that require more detailed dissection than the standard biopsies e.g. complex anatomical excision specimens, an additional pathologist cut down fee will be charged.

Additional charges apply to large or complex samples as detailed in the Diagnostic Histopathology Pricing found at: <http://www.surreyvetpathology.com/pricing>

Samples requiring decalcification

Decalcification may be needed for biopsies including bone or those that are mineralised or ossified. We will endeavour to process an initial soft tissue section from such biopsies, which would be reported within the standard TAT of 2-3 days. Decalcification time varies from a few hours to a few days depending on the sample size and degree of mineralisation or ossification.

We aim to provide an estimate of the expected time for the final report.

Special stains

Most common special stains e.g. PAS, ZN, Gram, Toluidine Blue and other standard chromatic stains are typically carried out after the initial report at the pathologist's request and are not charged separately. This will be indicated in the initial histopathology report and an addendum will follow when results are available. For most special stains this will be a further 2-3 days, although some techniques may take a little longer. Some more complex special stains (e.g. silver staining techniques) will carry an additional charge which will be communicated before proceeding. Similarly additional special stains carried out for clinician's interest that are not necessarily required in the diagnostic process will be charged separately.

ImmunoHistoChemistry (IHC)

Where appropriate, immunohistochemical stains are typically recommended in the initial histopathology report. These are priced separately upon request. For most IHCs the TAT will be around 1 week.

Marking surgical boundaries and orientation

Where a specific boundary or orientation needs to be marked, the preferred method is to use sutures e.g. one suture marks the cranial border, two sutures marks the medial aspect. Surgical inks can also be used. **Please do not use hypodermic needles or other sharps to mark boundaries due to risk of injury to our technicians.**

Teaching and Research

Following their diagnostic use histological tissues will be stored, typically as paraffin wax embedded fixed tissues. They may subsequently be put to good use for teaching purposes with our students and trainee pathologists, and also may contribute to further study as part of research projects where applicable. Where publications are made, any personal information will be anonymised.

Storage

All samples submitted for histological assessment become the property of the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Surrey. Tissues embedded in paraffin wax blocks and any resulting slides will be stored indefinitely. Any remaining fixed wet tissues from the submitted samples will be stored only for 2 months before being disposed of by incineration.

Pricing and Terms & Conditions

All Histopathology Services offered by the University of Surrey at the Veterinary Pathology Centre are subject to our standard terms and conditions for the supply of Veterinary Pathology Services available on our website at: <http://www.surreyvetpathology.com/terms-and-conditions>

Current Prices for Diagnostic Histopathology can be found at:
<http://www.surreyvetpathology.com/pricing>