

**SPECIMEN COLLECTION
MANUAL**

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INTRODUCTION

Stockton Pathology Medical Group is dedicated to providing quality pathology services to its referring physicians and patients. To assist in the proper specimen procurement and handling we have developed this handbook.

The handbook is divided into three main sections: Surgical Pathology, Cytology and Patient Instructions.

- The surgical pathology section describes surgical pathology services and lists specimen procurement and handling requirements.
- The cytology section describes different cytology services and lists specimen procurement.
- The patient instruction section gives instructions for patients so that optimal specimens can be obtained.

If you have questions, which are not answered in this handbook, feel free to contact Stockton Pathology Medical Group and our staff or pathologist will assist you in answering questions.

Surgical Pathology
1800 N California Street
Stockton, CA 95204
Office: 209-467-6491
Hours: 800-1700

Cytology/Histology
2131 N. California Street
Stockton, CA 92504
209-235-8510
Hours: 800-1100

SURGICAL PATHOLOGY
GROSS AND MICROSCOPIC EXAMINATION

Method: Histologic examination.

Specimen Requirements:

1. Submit pathology specimens for routine examination in 10% neutral buffered formalin. The specimen should be completely covered with the formalin solution.
2. If bacterial culture is desired, submit a separate piece of tissue to microbiology for culture or call for special handling of the specimen prior to performing of biopsy. Tissue submitted in formalin or other fixatives cannot be used for microbiologic culture.
3. If special studies such as frozen section, gene rearrangement or immunofluorescence are indicated, please call the pathology office for special handling instructions prior to the biopsy. Call for special handling instructions on muscle, nerve and kidney biopsies prior to performing the biopsy.

Collection Notes:

1. Small specimens such as biopsies are to be placed immediately in fixative, unless special studies such as frozen section are requested. Use approximately 5-10 times as much fixative solution as the bulk of tissue. Small biopsies can be ruined if allowed to dry out.
2. Submit lesions from different anatomic locations in separate containers.
3. Label all specimens on the side of the container with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as medical record number or date of birth), site of biopsy/specimen and date of service.
Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification.
4. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group pathology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen, any pertinent history and billing information.
5. Specimens received with out the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedule: Monday through Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days, increased turn around time may be caused by need for additional clinical information, decalcification or special stains.

Notes:

- The pathology department will assign a CPT code depending on the level of service provided.
- Special stains and additional studies may be performed if the pathologist deems them clinically indicated.
- Pathology supplies (formalin, containers, requisitions etc.) can be requested from the pathology department at (209) 467-6491
- Call (209) 467-6491 for specimen pick-up.

SURGICAL PATHOLOGY

FROZEN SECTION

Method: Histologic examination

Specimen Requirements:

1. Submit pathology specimens for frozen section examination as fresh tissue without preservative, submitted on saline soaked gauze to prevent drying. Tissue submitted in formalin cannot be used for frozen sectioning.
2. If bacterial or fungal cultures are desired, submit a separate piece of tissue to microbiology for culture or call for special handling of the specimen prior to performing the surgery. Tissue submitted in formalin or other fixatives cannot be used for microbiological culture.

Collection Notes:

1. Call the pathology department at (209) 467-6491 before doing the surgery for instructions and scheduling.
2. Specimens are to be submitted fresh, without preservatives. Gauze moistened with saline will prevent the specimen from drying out. The appearance of tissue can be altered if allowed to dry out. Non-isotonic water will distort the specimen. Too much saline will distort the specimen.
3. Submit lesions from different anatomic locations in separate containers if clinically indicated.
Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification.
4. Label all specimens on the side of the container with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as medical record number or date of birth) and site of biopsy/specimen and date of service/procedure.
5. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group pathology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen and any pertinent history and billing information.

Specimens received with out the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedules: Daily, Monday through Friday by appointment for outpatient specimens from physician offices.

Turnaround time: STAT

CPT: 88331

Notes:

- The pathology department will assign a CPT code depending on the level of service provided.
- Special stains and additional studies may be performed if the pathologist deems them clinically indicated.
- Pathology supplies (formalin, containers, requisitions etc.) can be requested from the pathology department at (209) 467-6491
- Call (209) 467-6491 for specimen pick-up.

**SURGICAL PATHOLOGY
GROSS EXAMINATION**

Method: Gross examination.

Specimen Requirements:

1. Submit pathology specimens for routine gross examination in 10% neutral buffered formalin. The specimen should be completely covered with the formalin solution.
2. If bacterial or fungal cultures are desired, submit a separate piece of tissue to microbiology for culture or call for special handling of the specimen prior to performing the surgery. Tissue submitted in formalin or other fixatives cannot be used for microbiologic culture.

Collection Notes:

1. Small specimens such as biopsies are to be placed immediately in fixative, unless special studies such as frozen section are requested. Use approximately 5-10 times as much fixative solution as the bulk of tissue. Small biopsies can be ruined if allowed to dry out.
2. Submit lesions from different anatomic locations in separate containers.
3. Label all specimens on the side of the container with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as medical record number or date of birth), site of biopsy/specimen and date of service.
Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification.
4. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group pathology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen, any pertinent history and billing information.
5. Specimens received with out the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedule: Monday through Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- The pathology department will assign a CPT code depending on the level of service provided.
- Special stains and additional studies may be performed if the pathologist deems them clinically indicated.
- Pathology supplies (formalin, containers, requisitions etc.) can be requested from the pathology department at (209) 467-6491
- Call (209) 467-6491 for specimen pick-up

**CYTOLOGY
BODY FLUIDS**

Synonyms: Effusions, ascites fluid, thoracentesis fluid, pleural fluid, abdominal fluid, breast cyst fluid.

Method: Cytological examination using filter preparation with smear preparations and cell block when indicated.

Specimen Requirements:

1. 100 cc of fresh fluid without preservative is optimal but smaller volumes will suffice.
2. Collect with 3 units of heparin per cc of anticipated fluid volume.
3. Call for pickup and delivery for cytology immediately.
4. Refrigerate specimens until transportation arrives.
5. If microbiological culture is desired, submit a separate sterile specimen to microbiology.

Collection notes:

1. Label all specimens on the side of the container with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as medical record number or date of birth), site of biopsy/specimen and date of service/procedure.
Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification.
2. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group cytology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen and any pertinent history and billing information.
3. Specimens received with out the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedule: Monday through Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- The cytology department will assign CPT codes depending on the level of service provided.
- To request cytology supplies (sputum cups, tubes of CytoLyt, spray fixative, Coplin jars, requisitions etc.) or four courier pick up call the office at 209-467-6491

CYTOLOGY BRUSHINGS

Synonyms: bronchial brushings, gastric brushings

Method: Cytologic examination using filter preparation with smear preparations and cell block when indicated.

Specimen Requirements:

1. Brushing specimens should be submitted in CytoLyt solution or saline solution.
2. Call for pickup and delivery to cytology immediately.
3. Refrigerate specimens until transportation arrives.
4. If microbiologic culture is desired, submit a separate sterile specimen to microbiology if possible. If not possible, clearly indicate on the container and all requisitions that the specimen is to be for culture and cytological examination and do not put brush into CytoLyt solution. The brush should be placed in sterile saline solution.

Collection Notes:

6. Small specimens such as biopsies are to be placed immediately in fixative, unless special studies such as frozen section are requested. Use approximately 5-10 times as much fixative solution as the bulk of tissue. Small biopsies can be ruined if allowed to dry out.
7. Submit lesions from different anatomic locations in separate containers.
8. Label all specimens on the side of the container with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as medical record number or date of birth), site of biopsy/specimen and date of service.
Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification.
9. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group pathology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen, any pertinent history and billing information.
10. Specimens received with out the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedule: Monday through Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- The cytology department will assign CPT codes depending on the level of service provided.
- To request cytology supplies (sputum cups, tubes of CytoLyt, spray fixative, Coplin jars, requisitions etc.) or four courier pick up call the office at 209-467-6491

CYTOLOGY
CEREBROSPINAL FLUID

Synonyms: CSF cytology, spinal fluid cytology

Method: Cytologic examination

Specimen Requirements:

1. Cerebrospinal fluid with out fixative
2. Call for pick up and delivery for cytology immediately
3. Refrigerate specimens until transportation arrives
4. If microbiologic culture is desired, submit a sperate sterile specimen to microbiology (the culture specimen should not be refrigerated).

Collection notes:

1. A physician obtains cerebrospinal fluid via lumbar puncture using aseptic technique
2. Label all specimens on the side of the container with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as MRN, or DOB), and site of biopsy/specimen and date of service.

Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification

3. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group cytology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen, and any pertinent history and billing info.
4. Specimens received without the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedule: Monday through Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- The cytology department will assign CPT codes depending on the level of service provided.
- To request cytology supplies (sputum cups, pap kits, tubes of CytoLyt, spray fixative, Coplin jars, requisitions etc.) or for courier pick up call the Cytology department at 209-235-8510

CYTOLOGY
FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION BIOPSY

Synonyms: FNA, aspiration biopsy, fine needle biopsy

Method: Cytologic examination

Specimen Requirements:

1. Alcohol and/or air-dried slides labeled with the patient's name and date of service.
2. Needles used for aspiration may also be rinsed in CytoLyt solution, (do not submit the syringe needle).

Collection Notes:

1. A physician obtains cerebrospinal fluid via lumbar puncture using aseptic technique
2. Label all specimens on the side of the container with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as MRN, or DOB), and site of biopsy/specimen and date of service.
Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification
3. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group cytology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen, and any pertinent history and billing info.
4. Specimens received without the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup schedule: Monday through Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- The cytology department will assign CPT codes depending on the level of service provided.

To request cytology supplies (sputum cups, Pap kits, tubes of CytoLyt, spray fixative, Coplin jars, requisitions etc.) or four courier pick up call 209-467-6491

CYTOLOGY
NIPPLE DISCHARGE

Method: Cytologic examination

Specimen Requirements:

Alcohol fixed slides labeled with the patient's name, laterality of the breast (left or right), and date of service.

Collection notes:

1. The patient should be aware that the intent is to collect some of the discharge onto a glass slide for cytological examination
2. Place a glass slide, labeled with the patient's name, under the drainage from the nipple.
Note: Slides should be labeled at the time of specimen collection in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification. The patient's name should be printed on the slide with a pencil. A secondary identifier (such as MRN or DOB) is highly desirable to ensure that the slide can be definitively identified in the lab.
3. Collect a drop or two of the fluid onto the slide.
4. Using another labeled slide, use the flat surface of the slide to gently smear the material and then pull the slides apart.
5. Immediately fix the slides using 95% alcohol fixative.
6. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group cytology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen, any pertinent history and billing information.
7. Specimens received without the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup schedule: Monday through Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- The cytology department will assign CPT codes depending on the level of service provided.
- To request cytology supplies (sputum cups, Pap kits, tubes of CytoLyt, spray fixative, Coplin jars, requisitions etc.) or four courier pick up call 209-467-6491.

**CYTOLOGY
SPUTUM**

Synonyms: Sputum series, pulmonary cytology series

Method: Cytologic examination with filter and smear preparation.

Specimen Requirements:

1. Deep cough specimen.
2. A series of three first morning sputum specimens increases diagnostic sensitivity.
3. Refrigerate specimens if there is a delay in transportation.

Collection Notes:

1. Specimens to be shared with microbiology should be submitted with out any fixative solution.
2. Specimens submitted for cytology only may be mixed with 30 cc of CytoLyt solution. (CytoLyt solution contains alcohols and should never be used internally as a lavage solution).
3. Label all specimens on the side of the container with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as MRN or DOB), and site of biopsy/specimen and date of service.
Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of the biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification.
4. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group[cytology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen and any pertinent history and billing information.
5. Specimens received without the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedule: Monday – Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- They cytology department will assign CPT codes depending on the level of service provided.
- To request cytology supplies (sputum cups, pap kits, tubes of CytoLyt, spray fixative, Coplin jars, requisitions etc.) or for courier pick up call 209-467-6491.

CYTOLOGY
TZANK SMEAR

Synonyms: Herpes, smear, herpes cytology

Method: Cytologic examination

Specimen Requirements: Alcohol fixed slides labeled with the patient's name and date of service

Collection Notes:

1. Label the slides with the patient's name and date of service.
Note: Slides should be labeled at the time of specimen collection in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification. The patient's name should be printed on the slide with a pencil. A secondary identifier (such as a MRN or DOB) is highly desirable to ensure that the slide can be definitively identified in the laboratory.
2. Carefully cleanse the area to be sampled.
3. Gently unroof a vesicle
4. Gently scrape the base of the vesicle with the scalpel blade.
5. Smear the cellular elements from the knife-edge onto the slide.
6. Immediately fix the smear with 95% alcohol.
7. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group cytology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen and any pertinent history and billing information.
8. Specimens received without the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedule: Monday – Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- They cytology department will assign CPT codes depending on the level of service provided.
- To request cytology supplies (sputum cups, pap kits, tubes of CytoLyt, spray fixative, Coplin jars, requisitions etc.) or for courier pick up call 209-467-6491.

CYTOLOGY
URINE

Method: Cytologic examination

Specimen Requirements:

1. 50 to 100 cc of fresh voided urine
2. First morning specimen is to be discouraged because the cells are poorly preserved
3. A fresh voided specimen after good hydration is best
4. 24-hour urine specimens are unacceptable due to poor preservation
5. Deliver to laboratory immediately
6. Refrigerate specimen if there is a delay in transportation

Patient preparation: It is important to hydrate the patient with one glass of water every 15-20 min for 2 hours prior to collection.

Collection Notes:

1. Indicate if the specimen is voided or catheterized
2. Label all specimens on the side of the containers with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as MRN or DOB), site of biopsy/specimen and date of service.
Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification.
3. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group cytology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen and any pertinent history and billing information.
4. Specimens received without the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedule: Monday – Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- They cytology department will assign CPT codes depending on the level of service provided.
- To request cytology supplies (sputum cups, pap kits, tubes of Cytolyt, spray fixative, Coplin jars, requisitions etc.) or for courier pick up call 209-467-6491.

CYTOLOGY WASHINGS

Synonyms: Bronchial washings, gastric washings, pelvic washings and peritoneal washings

Method: Cytologic examination using filter preparation with smear preparations and cell block when indicated.

Specimen Requirements:

1. Bronchial washings or lavages submitted fresh without fixative
2. Call for pick up and delivery to cytology immediately
3. Refrigerate specimens until transportation arrives
4. If microbiologic culture is desired, submit a separate sterile specimen to microbiology if possible. If not possible, clearly indicate on the container and all requisition that the specimen is to be for culture and cytological examination

Collection Notes:

1. Specimens are collected by a physician using a lavage solution.
2. Specimens to be shared with microbiology must be submitted without any fixative solution. Specimens submitted for cytology only may be mixed with 30 cc of CytoLyt solution. (CytoLyt solution contains alcohols and should never be used internally as a lavage solution).
3. Label all specimens on the side of the containers with the patient's name, secondary identifier (such as MRN or DOB), site of biopsy/specimen and date of service.
Note: Containers should be labeled at the time of biopsy in the presence of the patient to ensure proper patient identification.
4. Submit specimens with a Stockton Pathology Medical Group cytology requisition form including patient's last and first name, age, referring physician, source of specimen and any pertinent history and billing information.
5. Specimens received without the proper information must either be returned for proper identification or the referring physician's office must be contacted for the needed information.

Setup Schedule: Monday – Friday

Turnaround time: One to two days

Notes:

- They cytology department will assign CPT codes depending on the level of service provided.
- To request cytology supplies (sputum cups, pap kits, tubes of CytoLyt, spray fixative, Coplin jars, requisitions etc.) or for courier pick up call 209-467-6491.

PATIENT SPECIMEN COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS
SPUTUM SERIES

You have been asked to submit a sputum specimen for cytologic examination. In order to collect a good sample we ask that you follow these instructions.

You will need:

1. Three sterile sputum collection cups labeled with your name, date of birth and the dates and times the specimens are collected
 2. Three requisitions filled out with your name demographic information and history
 3. A copy of your insurance card if you would like us to bill your insurance company
- When you wake up in the morning, rinse your mouth out with water (not mouthwash) and expectorate (cough) a deep cough specimen into a sterile specimen container. Do not include saliva (spit), nasal drainage or food particles.
 - As soon as possible, bring the specimen, a requisition and insurance information to a Health Care Clinical Laboratory drawing station for processing.
Repeat this procedure daily for three days.

Thank you for choosing Stockton Pathology Medical Group.

PATIENT SPECIMEN COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS

URINE

You have been asked to submit a urine specimen for cytologic examination. In order to collect a sample that has well-preserved material for examination, we ask you follow these instructions.

You will need:

- A sterile urine collection cup labeled with our full name, type of specimen and date the specimen is collected.
 - A requisition filled out with your name, demographic information and history.
 - A copy of your insurance card if you would like us to bill your insurance company.
1. Drink one glass (6oz) of water every 15 minutes for 2 to 3 hours
 2. Once you are well hydrated, empty al urine from your bladder (do not collect this sample).
 3. One hour later, collect a urine specimen into a sterile container.
 4. Refrigerate the specimen until you can take it to the laboratory for processing.
 5. As soon as possible, take the specimen, the requisition and insurance information to any Health Care Laboratory drawing station for processing.

Thank you for choosing Stockton Pathology Medical Group.