

Charleston Area Medical Center Health System
Cytology Laboratory-General Information

Operating Hours

The Cytology Laboratory is open Monday through Friday from 8:00- 5:00pm. Specimens received after 3:00pm (CSF after 4:00pm) will not be processed and read until the next business day.

Receiving Areas for Cytology Specimens

Memorial Hospital

Inpatients, outpatients, and clinic patients - Specimens are delivered to the Cytology Laboratory.

General Hospital, Teays Valley Hospital, and Women and Children's Hospital

Deliver specimens to laboratory receiving area. Prompt delivery is important. Courier will deliver specimens to Memorial Division.

Type of Specimens Accepted for Diagnosis

- Cervical Smears (Pap Smears for Cancer Screening)
- Thin Prep (Liquid based, thin-layer cell preparation of Pap Smears used for cancer screening. HPV typing, CT, NG and HSV testing may be requested and will be sent to the appropriate area for testing.
- Respiratory Tract:
 - Sputum
 - Induced Sputum
 - Bronchial Washings, BALs, and Brushings
- Urine (Mainly for cancer screening; occasionally for cytomegalic inclusions)
- Effusions of serous cavities ("Fluids")
- Breast smears (Including nipple secretions or aspirations)
- Spinal fluid for tumor screening or leukemic cells
- Skin and oral lesions
- "Imprints" from surgical specimens (through the pathologist only)
- Aspiration biopsy material (different body sites)
- Esophageal, gastric, and Common Bile Duct (CDB) brushings

Pap Smear Supplies for Inpatients

The following materials are obtained from Material Management:

- 1 x 3 Frosted slide
- Spray-Cyte fixative
- Cardboard slide holders
- Arye spatulas
- Cervical brushes
- Cytopathology Request #17-7492

Additional supplies obtained from the Cytology Laboratory upon request:

- Thin Prep Test Pack used for liquid based pap smears

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Additional supplies obtained from Central Services:

- Urine bottles
- Tight lid sputum jars
- Collection containers

Fixative should be ordered from the Pharmacy

- A 50% Alcohol solution or Cytolyte is used as a fixative for Non Gynecologic specimens unless otherwise noted.

Pap Smear Supplies for Outpatient

The following materials are obtained for physician offices from the CAMC Cytology Laboratory (304-388-5562) or CAMC LabWorks Client Services Department (304-388-5093) upon request by telephone without charge:

- 1 x 3 frosted slides
- Spray-cyte fixative
- Cardboard slide holders
- Ayre spatulas
- Cervical brushes
- Cytopathology Request Slips #17-7492
- Thin Prep test pack

Supplies may be picked up in the Cytology Department or delivered by CAMC LabWorks Courier Service.

All specimens not fulfilling general or specific requirements of the Cytology Laboratory will be returned to the originating physician and/or nursing unit for clarification or recollection.

Acceptance of Specimens

Specimens must meet the following criteria to be accepted for processing and interpretation in the Cytology Laboratory.

Female Genital Smears

1. Specimen should be spread evenly on slide, which is labeled with lead pencil on frosted end of slide with patient's first and last name and second identifier.
2. Specimen must be fixed with cell fixative in order that cellular detail is preserved (Genital smear should be held 12 inches from can when spraying).
3. Place in cardboard folder and secure with tape or a rubber band.
4. Specimen submitted in ThinPrep vial must be labeled with patient's first and last name and second identifier. The brush is NOT to be left in the vial.
5. Make sure the requisition has been completely filled out with the following information:
 - Patient's full name
 - Patient's Address or Room Number (If inpatient)
 - Patient's pertinent clinical history. Answer question: Is patient at risk?
 - Patient's age/date of birth
 - Patient's last menstrual period or menstrual history, i.e., menopause/pregnant/postpartum/hysterectomy
 - Doctor's name and address
 - Billing information – If patient's insurance is to be billed, a copy of the insurance card or the insurance information should be completed on requisition slip. If Medicare/Medicaid is to be billed, the social security number is required (for both patient and person under whom they are covered, along with a copy of the Medicare/Medicaid card. An ICD 10 Code is required on all patient billing. Incomplete billing information causes a delay in the processing of the specimen.
6. Name on frosted end of slide and requisition must match or specimen will be rejected.

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Non-Genital and Aspirations

1. All non-genital specimens must arrive in the laboratory in preferred quantities of no more than 50mL. Do not send large quantity of a specimen
2. Specimen should be in a tightly capped container in a plastic specimen bag with request slip in separate pocket.
3. Specimen containers should be identified with patient's first and last name and second identifier and type of specimen.
4. All specimens should arrive in the laboratory fresh without fixative or preservative, unless otherwise noted.
5. Requisition slip containing all pertinent information such as listed for genital smears must accompany specimen in separate pocket of plastic specimen bag.
6. No specimen will be accepted if the container has leaked or specimen spilled out in bag, on requisition, bottle or slide container. The floor will be called and asked to pick up rejected specimen (if inpatient) or the specimen will be sent back to doctor's office.
7. Specimens will not be accepted in a vacuum bottle.
8. Every attempt will be made to clarify any information so that a specimen can be accepted without causing any risk or delay in care to the patient.

Rejection of Specimens

Listed below are some of the instances when specimens will be considered unacceptable.

Unacceptable Specimens

- Specimen sent to Cytology without the proper cytology requisition.
- Unlabeled slides or incorrectly labeled slides.
- Labeling of specimen does not correspond the cytology requisition.
- Specimens not identified with site of origin.
- Specimens which are not sealed in plastic bags with the requisition in the separate pocket.
- Specimens that have spilled out of container on the requisition.
- Incomplete billing information will cause a delay in the process of cytological specimens.
- Any fluid collected in a glass vacuum bottle.
- Syringes with attached needles. If sending syringe, please remove needle and apply cap.

All of the following specimens will be excluded from testing and an unacceptable report will be generated when one of the specimens are received in the department.

- 24 hour urines
- Blood
- Semen
- Feces

Return of Improperly Identified Specimens

1. Specimen sent to Cytology for interpretation will be returned to point of origin if not properly labeled and requisitioned. The specimen will be returned for the following reasons:
 - Slides not identified with lead pencil on frosted/etched on glass end with diamond point pencil.
 - Wrong requisition sent with specimen.
 - Name on slides and requisition slip not match.
 - Physician name not included on inpatient requisition.
2. Cytology technician will note reason for return on a separate sheet and include it with the specimen.
3. Outpatient specimen will be delivered to offices by courier service to the respective physicians.
4. Specimens should be corrected at point of origin and returned to Cytology.

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Fixed Slides Received Broken

Physician will be notified by phone or email.

Weekends, Holidays and After Hours Preparation

Bronchial, Urine, and Sputum-Deliver to Automated Procedures Laboratory and refrigerate.

Pleural Fluid and any other Fluid except CSF

- Deliver to Automated Procedures Laboratory.
- No more than 50-100mL should be sent in a screw top bottle.
- No vacuum bottles accepted.
- If large container of fluid arrives from which several tests must be completed, including cytology, 100mLs should be removed and refrigerated.

CSF

Deliver to Automated Procedures Laboratory (APL). Slides will be made in APL. Do not add alcohol to these fluids as it is cytocentrifuged immediately.