
Transport of specimens to the laboratory – Placental Group

1.0 Purpose and scope.

Tissue samples may be collected from patients for research purposes. Tissues should be collected from the Operating Theatre as soon as they are available after notification from the Operating Theatre staff. Tissues will usually be collected in a fresh state for further handling within the laboratory.

Tissues may be fixed in formalin for 24-48 hours and subsequently processed into paraffin wax blocks.

Fresh tissues may be rapidly frozen directly into liquid nitrogen or (with cryoprotection) in liquid nitrogen cooled isopentane. Fresh tissues may be subjected to enzyme digestion for cell purification and subsequent storage for protein and RNA extraction.

Tissues may be transported to the Department of Cellular Pathology for processing into paraffin wax.

After use tissues may be transported to the Department of Cellular Pathology for disposal.

2.0 COSHH / Health & Safety

Tissue samples should be regarded as low hazard clinical and biological samples (Category B).

This SOP refers only to collection of samples from the RVI operating theatres or delivery suite to be transported to the Leech Building. A member of staff will travel with the samples at all times. This SOP is not appropriate for transport of samples between local sites that involves transport outside of the building eg Centre for Life/Freeman Hospital to the Medical School.

Appropriate BIOCOSHH assessment should be completed because of the risk of exposure to unfixed tissues.

Ensure that all staff are familiar with safe handling procedures and have read and understood the COSHH assessment.

Ensure that all staff are familiar with the route to and from the operating theatres/wards.

Ensure that all staff are aware of the regulations regarding wearing of laboratory coats and protective gloves in the hospital corridors.

3.0 Equipment / reagents

- Primary container: watertight sealed opaque plastic container.
- Outer container: sealed leak-proof bag which is clearly labelled with research group name, location and contact details.
- Clean polythene bags.

4.0 References

- 4.1 HTA
- 4.2 University/Faculty Safety Policy
 - 4.2.1 Internal transport of biological/clinical samples to university laboratories
 - 4.2.2 Biological transport of category B biological agents
- 4.3 Royal Victoria Infirmary Guidelines for Transport of Specimens
- 4.4 Department of Cellular Pathology, Royal Victoria Infirmary

5.0 Procedure

Collection of Specimens from Operating Theatre

1. Receive telephone call regarding availability of specimens to collect from Operating Theatre/Delivery Suite.
2. Retrieve equipment for collection and proceed to Operating Theatre/Delivery Suite.
3. Collect sample with the sample information sheet
 - **The sample information sheet must be collected with the sample**
 - **Do not accept a sample unless there is a sample information sheet**
 - **Check that the consent is documented on the front of the sample information sheet**
 - **For Termination of Pregnancy (TOP) samples check that the back of the form has been signed by the surgeon**
4. Place the sample into a sealed plastic container.
5. Place sealed plastic container into leak-proof bag which is clearly labelled with research group name, location and contact details.

For placental samples

6. Return directly to Laboratory.

For samples of non-pregnant myometrium or cervix

5. Take sample to Department of Cellular Pathology for dissection of sample by trained cellular pathologist

Transport of Specimens to Department of Cellular Pathology for processing

1. For processing into paraffin, after 24-48 hours fixation in formalin, transport specimens in a sealed plastic container contained within a leak-proof bag, which is clearly labelled with research group name, location and contact details, to the Department of Cellular Pathology.
2. Specimens will be processed in this accredited pathology laboratory.
3. Collect specimens as arranged after processing.

6.0 Site Specific Details

Personnel: Staff and students within Uteroplacental Tissue Bank Group, ICM

Location: Uteroplacental Tissue Bank Laboratories 3rd Floor Leech Building

Induction: All are provided with a written protocol with safety details. Demonstration is given with continuing supervision as necessary.