


Autopsy Specimen Handling

 Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist	DOCUMENT TYPE: Procedure	ORIGIN DATE IN TITLE 21 3/11/2020
CLIA Lab Director: Dr. Gregory Pomper	LAB DEPARTMENT: Central Processing Lab	CONTACT: Central Processing Lab

APPLICABLE LABORATORY(S):

- North Carolina Baptist Hospital (NCBH)
- Lexington Medical Center (LMC)
- Davie Medical Center (DMC)
- Wilkes Medical Center (WMC)
- High Point Medical Center (HPMC)
- Westchester
- Clemmons

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines to Central Processing staff for processing and storage of blood samples from autopsy cases. Accession and Spin rotation are assigned specific functions but staff are expected to work together and communicate when workload is heavy. Autopsy specimens are kept for a minimum of one year.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to Central Processing Lab team members.

DEFINITIONS

- A.** Procedure: A process or method for accomplishing a specific task or objective.
- B.** WFBH Lab System: Wake Forest Baptist Lab System is a health system that includes Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and all affiliated organizations including Wake Forest University Health Sciences (WFUHS), North Carolina Baptist Hospital (NCBH), Lexington Medical Center (LMC), Davie Medical Center (DMC), Wilkes Medical Center (WMC), High Point Medical Center (HPMC), Lab at Westchester and Lab at Clemmons.

SUPPLIES/MATERIALS

Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when handling biohazardous specimens.

PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

A. Specimen Storage

1. Autopsy sample racks are stored long term in freezer 11 located in the main lab storeroom. The current, in-use autopsy rack is kept in the Central Processing Spin freezer. Specimens are electronically stored in Beaker Container Storage.

Place current autopsy samples in the appropriate storage position in the current autopsy rack, located in the Spin freezer.

C. Autopsy Rack Rotation and Organization

1. There are 20 Autopsy Racks, numbered WIN Autopsy 1 through 20, physically and in Beaker Container Storage.
2. Racks should be used in numerical order. For example, Rack 1, Rack 2, Rack 3, etc.
3. Fill each individual rack sequentially. For example, position A1, A2, A3, etc.
4. The person that places the last sample in a rack should place the full rack in freezer 11 in the storeroom.
5. Prepare a new rack:
 - i. Locate the next rack in numerical order. Pull the rack from freezer 11. For example, if you just filled up Rack 5, locate Rack 6.
 - ii. Open Container Storage in Beaker for the new rack. For example, open WIN Autopsy Rack 6.
 - iii. **Samples are kept for a minimum of 1 year.** If the specimens in the next Autopsy rack are less than 1 year old, notify management and do NOT discard. Autopsy samples are irretrievable. If in doubt about discarding samples, please ask for assistance. If samples are at least 1 year old, proceed to step iv.
 - iv. Check that the first or last sample in the rack matches what is listed in Container Storage. If it is correct, click Dispose All (bottom left of the window).
 - v. Physically discard the old samples in the biohazard bin in Spin.

D. Ordering in Requisition Entry (Accession Rotation)

1. In Beaker, open Requisition Entry activity.
2. Type WF Autopsy as the Submitter.
3. Verify that the specimen is labeled with a minimum of first and last name and autopsy number.
4. Type requisition number. The requisition number contains the year (for example, 24 for 2024). There are two categories of autopsies, which have different autopsy numbers:
 - i. Hospital Autopsies: PA24-XXXXX
 - ii. Medical Examiner Autopsies: MA24-XXXXX

5. When ordering in Beaker, drop the “WIN” portion that may be listed as part of the autopsy number. For example, a label with WINMA24-99999 would be entered as Requisition MA24-99999.
 - i. If micro lab has already received a culture sample on the patient, then the requisition number will already exist in Requisition Entry. Double check the patient name and proceed to section 9.
6. Type in the patient name and hit Enter.
7. If an existing patient record pops up in the Select Patient window, click Cancel. A new patient record will need to be generated.

Enter the Date of Birth (DOB), sex (M/F/Unknown), enter the unknown SSN (000-00-0000) and click New to create a new patient record. If the patient is a John Doe or Jane Doe, a DOB is not necessary.
8. Enter the provider listed on the requisition as the Auth & Ord Provider.
9. Enter Diagnosis Code: R69
10. In the Procedure section, order “AUTOPSY SPECIMEN HOLD (aka AUTOPSY) LAB8177.”
11. Click Create Specimens. Type in the Collection Date and Time from the requisition. Click Receive.
12. If the patient is a John Doe or Jane Doe, write the Autopsy Number on the top of the zebra label (for example, MA24-99999). This is the second identifier when a DOB is not available.
13. Open Beaker Container Storage and open the current Autopsy rack (listed as WIN Autopsy Rack 1, 2, 3, up to Rack 20).
14. Scan the autopsy sample into the next available position. Select Store at the pop-up window.

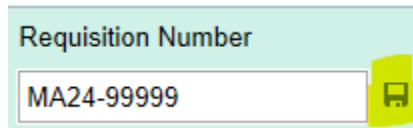
Warning ✕

 Are you sure you want to store this specimen?
24WIN-058X00001.1
24WIN-058X00001.1 could not be stored for the following reason:
All tests on the specimen must be either verified or canceled prior to storage.

15. Record the storage position number on the aliquot label for the Spin person to store the sample. Close out of Container Storage using the “X” button. Changes will automatically be saved.
16. Place a taglet on the requisition and file in the Manual Requisitions folder.
16. If a requisition number was entered incorrectly and needs to be changed, open Requisition Entry. Enter the Requisition number that needs updating. Click the pencil icon next to the Requisition number box. You can now edit the Requisition number. Click the Save icon when you’ve updated the information.



A screenshot of a web form titled "Requisition Number". It features a text input field containing the value "MA24-99999". To the right of the input field is a yellow pencil icon, indicating an edit function.



A screenshot of a web form titled "Requisition Number". It features a text input field containing the value "MA24-99999". To the right of the input field is a yellow save icon, indicating a save function.

E. Processing the Specimen (Spin Rotation)

1. Verify the specimen is labeled with the first and last name, and autopsy number.
2. Centrifuge the sample.
3. Label the aliquot tube with the zebra label. Initial the aliquot label to verify that you checked patient identifiers before aliquoting sample.
4. Transfer the serum into the aliquot tube.
 - The sample may be extremely hemolyzed.
 - Do not fill tubes more than halfway full to allow serum to expand when frozen.
5. Place the cells portion (original red top tube) in today’s extra rack in the Spin refrigerator.
6. Store the serum aliquot in the Spin freezer Autopsy rack, in the location written on the aliquot tube.

F. Finding a specimen in Container Storage

1. Open Specimen Inquiry by Patient.
2. Type Last name, First name in “Name/MRN” box. Type WF Autopsy in Submitter box. Click Find Patient. Highlight correct patient and click Accept.

Patient Lookup ✕

Select Patient Recent Patients Non-Human Only Show Inactive

Name/MRN: Submitter: 🔍

SSN: 🔍 Sex: 🔍

DOB: 📅

Use sounds-like

Select Patient ✕

Search 🔍

Patient Name	MRN	Alias	DOB	TOB	Age	Gender	SSN	Street Address	Race	Ethnicity	Submitt
TEST,AUTOPSY C			01/02/1900		124 yrs	M	xxx-xx-0000				WF Au

Records: 1, all records loaded.

- Click on the autopsy specimen accession to open Specimen Inquiry.
- Look at Specimen tracking “Put in Storage” to locate the Rack number and position.

24WIN-060X00001

Test, Autopsy C

M, 124 yrs, 1/2/1900
[MA24-01234](#) submitted by WF Autopsy

Blood, Venous

Collected Today 1000
 Container: 1 RED 10

Specimen Tracking

24WIN-060X00001.1 RED 10 - AUT HOLD		
02/29/2024		Detail
1125	Put In Storage	WIN AUTOPSY 11 slot A1 Remove
1026	Requisition Accepted	
1026	Received	Received into WINSTON LAB
1026	Collection Updated	Date/Time 2/29/2024 1000 EST
1013	Specimen Created	Requisition MA24-01234

G. Requests for Admission Blood by Autopsy/Medical Examiner

1. Receive a request by phone call from Medical Examiner or designee for blood samples from hospital admission on a deceased patient.
2. Open Specimen Inquiry by Patient. Look for blood samples collected on the date requested by the Medical Examiner.
3. If blood is available from date of admission, print the labels for the samples requested.
4. Write Autopsy on the bottom of the labels. Give the labels to bench techs to pull the blood.
5. When techs bring requested blood to Central Processing, place the samples in a biohazard bag, and in the Autopsy bin in the Spin refrigerator door.

LITERATURE REFERENCES

None

RELATED PROCEDURES/POLICIES IN NAVEX

None

ATTACHMENTS/LINKED DOCUMENTS IN TITLE 21

Attachment A: Detailed Beaker Instructions for Autopsy Specimens
Spin Procedures CP-SOP-0015
Container Storage in Beaker CP-SOP-0034

REVISION DATES: REVIEW CHANGE SUMMARY AS REPRESENTED IN TITLE 21.

Attachment A: Detailed Beaker Instructions for Autopsy Specimens

1. Open Requisition Entry. Enter WF Autopsy as the submitter.
2. Verify that specimen is labeled with name and autopsy number. Enter Requisition Number. Type name and hit Enter.
3. Enter (Standard Unknown) SSN of 000-00-0000, Sex (M/F/Nonbinary/Unknown), DOB, and click New to create a Patient record.

4. Enter Ordering provider (listed on requisition). Enter Diagnosis Code R69. Enter Procedure "AUTOPSY SPECIMEN HOLD (LAB8177)." Click Create Specimens.

5. Enter collection date and time from the requisition. Click Receive, Accept, & New.

Procedure	Specimen	Status	Specimen Type	Priority	Specimen Source	Dx	Q	C	B	H	L
1 Autopsy Specimen Hold [LAB8177]	24WIN-148X00001	Ordered	Blood	Routine	Venous						
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Add an order [5] + Create Specimens ↔ Receive All CC Results Cancel Orders </div>											
Specimen	Container	Coil Date [8]	Coil Time	Collector	External ID	Draw Type	A/C				
24WIN-148X00001	AH RED 10	5/27/2024	1244								

Lab Comments [9]

Requisition Comments

Receive, Accept, & New

6. If patient is a Jane Doe or John Doe, write autopsy number (ex: MA24-99999) on the zebra label as a second identifier.

7. Store the sample in Container Storage.

- a. Open Container Storage and search for the current autopsy hold rack (WIN Autopsy 1-20). Click Accept.

Container Storage Lookup ✕

Container Storage

WIN AUTOPSY 1
 Expanded Search

+ Create New

✓ Accept
✕ Cancel

- b. Scan the specimen label into the next open rack position. At the pop up window, click Store.

Warning ✕

⚠ Are you sure you want to store this specimen?

24WIN-060X00001.1

24WIN-060X00001.1 could not be stored for the following reason:
All tests on the specimen must be either verified or canceled prior to storage.

Store

Do not store

- c. Write the position number on the label (For example, A1).

d. Place the label in the specimen bag with the red top tube to be centrifuged and aliquoted.

8. Place a taglet on the requisition and file in Manual Requisitions folder to be scanned.