
PREVENTION OF CROSS CONTAMINATION DURING GROSS EXAMINATION

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I. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to prevent the cross-contamination of specimens during grossing.

II. Principle

Extraneous tissue or contaminants can influence and jeopardize the diagnosis and cause harm to patients. Efforts to prevent contamination during the gross examination can help reduce this potential harm.

III. Supplies

A. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

1. Disposable fluid resistant gown
2. Face shield or goggles
3. Nitrile gloves
4. Plastic Apron over disposable lab coat (optional)

B. Instrument and supplies

1. Cutting board
2. Scalpel handles and scalpel blades
3. Serrated and smooth tipped forceps
4. Ruler
5. Mesh biopsy bag, blue tissue sponges and/or filter paper
6. Ink
7. Cotton tipped swabs or wooden applicator sticks
8. Cassettes
9. Disinfectant
10. Paper towel or dissecting pads
11. Wire or plastic scrub brush
12. Scouring pad
13. Hematoxylin
14. Vinegar
15. Long blades for large specimens
16. Pipette
17. Syringes

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IV. Procedure

- A. Use of paper towel or grossing pads on cutting boards should be changed frequently to prevent extraneous tissue from adhering to tissue, forceps or other grossing tools and cassettes.
- B. Wipe and rinse tools (forceps and blades) between cases
- C. Change the scalpel blades between large cases or when sectioning the same case with both cancerous and non-cancerous tissue. Take sections from tumor and place in cassettes, clean tools, change blades and change pad of cutting board before sectioning the remaining benign areas of the specimen to prevent cross contamination within the same case.
- D. Limit the use of serrated forceps during grossing of biopsies. Serrated forceps should be cleaned frequently with disinfectant and a plastic or wire brush. This will reduce the extraneous tissue from adhering to the tools.
- E. Use a filtration method for the transfer of small biopsies from the container to a mesh bag, tissue sponge or tissue paper can ensure that direct transfer from container to filtration device occurred. Inspect specimen container after pour over.
- F. Avoid re-using plastic pipettes, re-using cotton swabs/applicator sticks on multiple specimens or "double dipping" the cotton swab/applicator in the ink.
- G. Grossing of similar types of specimens sequentially should be avoided if feasible

V. Results

Eliminate the cross-contamination from one specimen to another.

VI. References

Dimenstein, IB. (2013). *Extraneous Tissue in Surgical Pathology Practice*. Retrieved from <http://grossing-technology.com/home/perspectives-in-grossing-technology/extraneous-tissue-in-surgical-pathology-practice/>

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