

## Specimen Packaging and Transporting

Inadequate packaging of samples may cause leakage of tissue or cellular material, which might result in the loss of the actual pathology sample, therefore jeopardizing the laboratory's ability to undertake the test. Moreover, there is potential harm to the transporting courier. Hence, we advise all personnel handling, packaging and transporting cellular pathology samples to follow these rules and advice. If you require any assistance, do not hesitate to call us on 01923 233299.

Specimens known to be infected with high-risk organisms should be appropriately labelled and placed into a biohazard bag. Leaking specimens may neither be collected nor accepted into the laboratory.

**Samples or request forms received unlabelled or without the minimum essential identification criteria may be referred back to the requesting practitioner.**

### Closing specimen pots

It is extremely important to close the specimen pots tightly and securely ensuring that the seal is not broken. Improper closure of the specimen pot(s) is the most common cause for leakage.

### Reviewing specimens

Prior to packaging the specimen for transport to the laboratory, please check the request form and the specimen pot(s) to make sure that they are labelled correctly and that the form and the sample show the same patient details.



The patient name, date and time of collection and test requested should be identical on all items.

Please make sure that any special instructions (e.g. fax results; call doctor with results; send a copy of results to) are clearly indicated in the appropriate area of the form.

### Specimen transport bags

All specimen bags have two pockets - the front pocket is for the completed request form and the back pocket for the specimen(s). Once both request form and specimen(s) are in the specimen bag, seal the bag properly.

When packing the sample, place the request form in the outer pocket. This is to avoid it being contaminated should the sample leak and also allows us to read the request form without touching the sample container.

### Preparation for transport

Maintain formalin specimen pots, FNA slides, Thin-Prep vials at room temperature and refrigerate fresh diagnostic cytology specimens (such as fluids and cyst aspirates) over the weekend, unless otherwise noted in the specimen requirements.

### Health and safety note

When decanting formalin into the specimen container, gloves and safety glasses should be worn and the procedure carried out in a well ventilated room. Formalin is a strong irritant and contact with the skin and eyes must be avoided. Inhalation of fumes can cause damage to the respiratory system.

For further information please contact us on:

**01923 233 299**  
Out of hours: **07775 44 66 88**

**www.cellularpathologyservices.co.uk**  
info@cellpathservices.co.uk

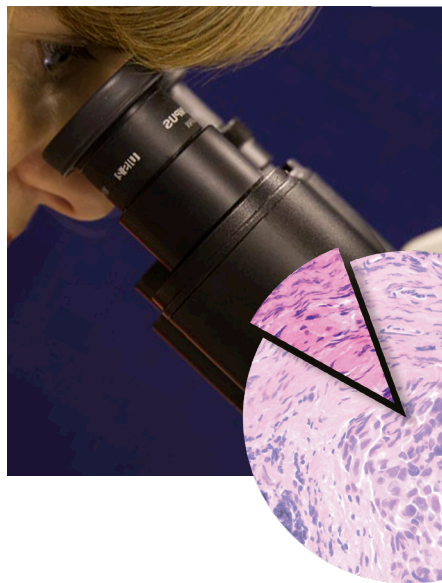


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In the event that spillages of this chemical should occur, use copious volumes of water to rinse it away and mop up any residue.

### Posting your pathology samples

Small histology specimens or ThinPrep™ vials for posting must be packaged in accordance with UN3373 regulations. CPS can provide all the postal packs to achieve compliance.



### UN3373 REGULATIONS

Any sample which is to be posted or couriered by non-medical courier to CPS must adhere to the following instructions for packaging.

### 1. Primary packaging

The 'specimen pot' should be of relevant size to the specimen and contain the appropriate fixative. Ensure that the lid is securely tightened to avoid leakage during transportation.

### 2. Secondary packaging

A polythene bag provides the secondary packaging layer into which the specimen container is placed. There should be absorbent tissue paper within this bag to soak up any leakage should this occur. This bag will need to be sealed and the corresponding request form placed into the outer side pocket of the bag.

### 3. Outer packaging

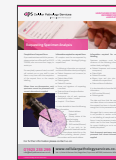
The specimens sent overnight or posted, an appropriate UN3373-compliant transport containers can be provided free by CPS on request.

### Specimen collection

All specimens will be collected centrally from the designated collection area at each hospital / clinic site at the time agreed. CPS will arrange for the collection of specimens as agreed with the client.

## Other useful leaflets

In addition to this healthcare staff information leaflet we also have:



Requesting Specimen Analysis



Handling of Histological Samples



Handling of Diagnostic Cytology Samples



Handling of Gynaecologic Cytology Samples



Requesting Consumables



Specimen Packaging & Transportation

To see our full range of Healthcare Information leaflets visit our website.

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