



Summary of Quality Control Procedures for Technical Preparation of Surgical Pathology Slides

The Dermatology Laboratory of Central States began accepting skin biopsies for processing in July 1984. The College of American Pathologists (CAP) performed our most recent inspection in April 2013. (CAP certification number 6477601). Our CLIA number is 36D0656401. We also maintain a current laboratory license with the state of New York.

Quality control procedures for preparation of surgical pathology slides include the following: The tissue is submitted to the lab in 10% neutral buffered formalin (NBF) bottles supplied by the laboratory in prefilled 7, 20, 40 and 80 ml containers. It is necessary to place the tissue in formalin within minutes after the biopsy procedure to guarantee the preservation of cellular structures. Next in the process is the measuring and grossing in of tissue performed by histotechnicians under the supervision of a board-certified dermatopathologist. Larger excisional specimens are bread loafed and submitted in multiple cassettes for best view of the surgical margins.

To maintain consistency in daily staining, a Hematoxylin & Eosin (H&E) control slide from a control block is stained and microscopically observed for morphological detail. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted at this time and modifications made. This information is written in a quality control log and all records are kept for at least two years according to CAP guidelines. To maintain quality throughout the staining process, a slide from each tray of 20 slides is microscopically inspected and compared with the control slide to guarantee optimal intensity, hue and specificity. Additionally, special stain slides have a control slide run in tandem with the special stain and numbered, filed and stored accordingly.

Biopsy bottles are numbered along with the corresponding pathology requisition and are kept in-house for at least two weeks after completion of the pathology report. All bottle storage trays are numbered and rotated in a two week cycle. Bottles containing sample tissue are kept for one to two months following diagnosis. Retention of the bottles allows the physician to verify the clinical diagnosis with the pathology findings and resolve any discrepancies in size, color or shape before disposal of the bottles.

Tissue blocks processed within the previous two years are stored on-site. Remaining tissue blocks will be stored at an off-site environmentally controlled warehouse for a minimum of five years per CAP regulations. Two years of stained slides are also kept on-site and older slides are stored off-site for a period of 10 years in accordance with CAP regulations. Stored blocks and slides are easily retrievable within 24-48 hours.