

Department of Cellular Pathology

GUIDELINES FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF NERVE AND MUSCLE BIOPSIES

MUSCLE BIOPSY: GUIDELINES

- Anaesthetise skin and subcutaneous tissue only; do **not** inject local anaesthetic into the muscle.
- Open the fascia overlying the muscle and excise muscle tissue from beneath the fascia. Fascia should **not** be included in the biopsy.
- Sent 2 identical pieces of muscle measuring 1x2cm (similar to the width of a biro). The long axis of the specimens should be in the direction of muscle fibre axis. Children biopsies can be smaller in diameter but not length.



- These specimens should be **placed dry into a sterile universal container** and **immediately transferred to the laboratory** to minimise loss of enzyme activity.
- The specimen should be in the laboratory **within 15 minutes** of it being removed from the patient.
- The labelled specimen, accompanied by a specimen card, should then be taken to the **Cellular Pathology Laboratory, Lower Ground, Jenner Wing: Staircase 20, Corridor 5** (Not specimen reception). **Ext 5257/5256**
- General points:
 1. Always handle muscle tissue with great care and in particular never squeeze or pull with forceps as this produces artefacts.
 2. Never immerse the fresh muscle specimen in any liquid such as saline.
 3. Muscle biopsies must be transferred **immediately** to the Cellular Pathology Laboratory, Lower Ground, Jenner Wing, Ext 5257.
 4. Always include the request form with the biopsy, properly labelled, with sufficient clinical details and an urgent contact name and phone or bleep number.
 5. **Specimens need to be booked** before being sent to the laboratory (Ext.5257/5256) and need to arrive in the department **before 3:30 pm**.

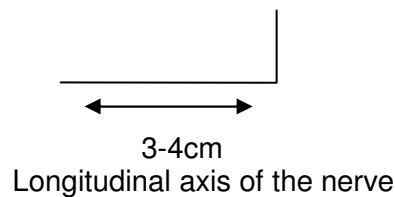
Note: The laboratory is not open on evenings, weekends or bank holidays.

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NERVE BIOPSY: GUIDELINES

- A single piece of nerve tissue measuring at least 3cm in length should be taken.



- The fresh nerve should be carefully laid, as straight as possible, onto a piece of smooth card and allowed to adhere for at least 30 seconds.
- The specimen should then be wrapped in a saline-dampened gauze (*squeeze out excess saline from the gauze; do **not** immerse the specimen in saline, formalin or other liquids*) placed in a sterile universal container and **immediately transferred to the laboratory**.
- The labelled specimen, accompanied by a specimen card, should then be taken to the **Cellular Pathology Laboratory, Lower Ground, Jenner Wing** (*Not specimen reception*).
- General points:
 6. Always handle nerve tissue with great care and in particular never squeeze with forceps as this produces crushing artefacts.
 7. Do **not** stitch, splint, clamp or pin tissue.
 8. Never immerse the fresh nerve specimen in any liquid such as saline.
 9. Nerve biopsies must be transferred **immediately** to the Cellular Pathology Laboratory, Lower Ground, Jenner Wing.
 10. Always include the request form with the biopsy, properly labelled, with sufficient clinical details and an urgent contact name and phone or bleep number.
 11. Specimens *need to be booked* before being sent to the laboratory (Ext.5257/5256) and need to arrive in the department **before 3:30 pm**.

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