

# SPECIMEN COLLECTION GUIDE



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Specimen Type	Collection Medium		Testing Options	Notes
<b>Skin/Soft Tissue</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viable skin (punches and shaves)</li> <li>Soft tissue (subcutaneous masses)</li> <li>Viable nail unit (punches, excisions)</li> </ul>	<b>Formalin Fixative</b> (Except punch biopsies obtained for the purpose of EPIDERMAL NERVE FIBER DENSITY testing, ENFD specimens MUST be placed in Zamboni's fixative.)		<b>Routine Histopathology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Histochemical Studies (PAS, GMS, FM)</li> <li>Immunohistochemical Stains (S100, Melan-A, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skin neoplasms (pigmented and verrucous lesions, masses, ulcerations)</li> <li>Dermatitis (tinea, eczema)</li> <li>Subcutaneous masses (lipoma, ganglia)</li> <li>Nail unit neoplasms (melanoma, squamous cell carcinoma, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Dry Keratin</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nail</li> <li>Skin scrapings</li> <li>Subungual Debris</li> </ul>	<b>Dry Keratin Bag</b>		<b>Routine Histopathology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Histochemical Studies (PAS, GMS, FM)</li> <li>False-Negative rates for fungal identification may be increased with:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exceedingly small samples</li> <li>Nail samples consisting of only distal plate</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>Fungal Culture</b> Identifies the genus and species of fungal elements; however, is plagued by a very high rate of false-negative tests. For this reason, cultures are performed in tandem with histochemical studies. Not available for formalin-fixed tissue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Superficial infections (such as tinea, candida, pitted keratolysis)</li> <li>Non-infectious nail dystrophy (psoriasis, onycholysis, microtrauma)</li> <li>General impression (neoplastic and inflammatory diseases may be suggested by superficial samples; however, definitive diagnoses are uncommon)</li> <li>Fungal culture final reports cannot be issued for a minimum of four weeks. Earlier growth may be reported in a preliminary report.</li> </ul>
	<b>Formalin</b>		<b>Routine Histopathology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Osteomyelitis, neoplasms, exostoses</li> </ul>
<b>Bone</b>	<b>Fresh (sterile cup)</b> <b>Aerobic and/or anaerobic swab</b> <b>E-swab (aerobic and/or anaerobic cultures)</b>		<b>Bacteriology</b> (aerobic culture, anaerobic cultures, sensitivities; all may be performed with a single e-swab)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify organisms causing osteomyelitis</li> <li>Specimens may be, if large, wrapped with gauze moisturized with saline or, if small, embedded within media within swab</li> <li>Anaerobic specimens should not be exposed to oxygen for more than 30 minutes (place in e-swab or anaerobic swab)</li> </ul>
<b>Aspiration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint fluids</li> </ul>	<b>Fresh (sterile cup) or in dehydrated alcohol</b>		<b>GOUT study</b> (crystal analysis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test for monosodium urate crystals</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masses, cysts</li> </ul>	<b>Fresh (sterile cup) or in formalin</b>		<b>CYTOLOGY</b> (study of cells)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ganglion cyst, benign and malignant neoplasms</li> </ul>
<b>Bacteriology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wounds</li> <li>Aspirations</li> </ul>	<b>Fresh (sterile cup)</b>		<b>Aerobic culture &amp; sensitivity</b>	Superficial tissues
	<b>E-swab or Swab with GEL</b>		<b>Aerobic and anaerobic culture &amp; sensitivity</b>	Deep tissue
	<b>Aerobic Swab (without GEL)</b>		<b>Aerobic culture &amp; sensitivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specimen should NOT be exposed to oxygen more than 30 minutes</li> <li>If the specimen is viable and received at MPA, it will be forwarded to a preferred reference laboratory</li> </ul>