

Returning your tissue to you

If you would like to have your tissue returned to you, you should inform your Doctor or Nurse, before the tissue is taken.

When the laboratory has completed the diagnosis of your tissue, a letter will be sent to you asking you to phone the Histology Laboratory and arrange a time for you to collect the specimen. You will need to have some form of identification with you when you collect your specimen (for example, drivers licence or passport).

If you wish to have someone collect the specimen on your behalf, you will need to give them a signed letter to present to the laboratory staff when they collect the specimen.

If your tissue was very small, it may have all been processed to make slides. We do recommend that the small samples and microscope slides are stored in the laboratory. This makes it much easier to check and review your results if necessary.

How your tissue will look when it is returned

Your tissue will not look like it did when it was removed. Tissue is preserved in Formalin, which changes the colour of the tissue and hardens it, and it may have been cut into many pieces for complete examination.

Formalin is a poison and your tissue should be handled with care. Please ensure the specimen is safely contained and labelled if it is to be stored in the freezer. Every effort is made to remove the formalin by washing in water

It should be buried according to local council regulations. Please be aware that if transporting this specimen on public transport, for example: Courier or Air Transport, that there are strict laws regarding the packaging and transportation. The person transporting specimens can incur fines. If you require any additional information regarding this please contact the International Air Transport Association for IATA regulations regarding transportation.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Laboratory directly on (03) 474 8309.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR TISSUE SAMPLE

A guide to samples sent to
the Histology Laboratory

*Your partner in providing results in
health since 1960*

Why is your tissue removed?

Your tissue will be looked at to find out why you are unwell, and make a more accurate diagnosis.

Before your tissue is removed

Your Surgeon or Doctor should talk to you about:

- Why your tissue needs to be removed
- The amount of tissue to be removed
- The importance of having these tests
- The importance of storing your microscope slides to enable future comparisons and review if necessary
- How long the laboratory will take to perform the tests
- If you would like your tissue samples returned to you
- All tissue received at the laboratory will be placed into a fixative.
- Consent forms to complete

Although all care is taken by staff in preparing your specimen for its return, we are unable to accept responsibility for any adverse events arising for the return of the specimen to you.

What will happen to your tissue?

Once your Surgeon or Doctor has removed the tissue, it will be sent to the Histology Laboratory

The tissue will be preserved in Formalin

The tissue will be examined to see if any disease is present. Small samples will be processed for further testing. Very thin slices will be placed onto microscope slides and stained to investigate all the cells

A Pathologist (cell specialist) will examine your tissue under a microscope, and make a diagnosis. This diagnosis will be given to your Surgeon or Doctor, who will discuss this with you

What will happen to my tissue following testing?

All tissue is treated with confidentiality and respect

Microscope slides and small processed samples

These are stored according to national and international standards. They are stored:

So they can be reviewed later if requested by your Doctor

To assist with audits of the laboratory to ensure results are reliable and are performed to a high standard

To assist in the education of hospital staff, in particular doctors and medical students

Occasionally for research into disease, but only with approval from Ethics Committee, and with your consent

In case one of your family might have a similar problem in the future, the slides can be compared.

Tissue not processed for microscopic testing

Any tissue not processed for testing is held by the laboratory for four weeks, and then disposed of.

The disposal of tissue has been designed to be both culturally appropriate and environmentally sensitive.

