



GUIDELINES FOR POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION AND SUBMISSION OF TISSUES FOR HISTOPATHOLOGY (“NECROPSY IN A BOTTLE”)

For a variety of reasons, it will sometimes prove most prudent for the clinician to perform the gross portion of a post-mortem examination. Tissues collected at necropsy can then be submitted to the pathologist for microscopic evaluation. In such instances, clear and thorough communication of clinical and gross findings to the pathologist will greatly increase the diagnostic value of this exercise. In these cases, discussion with the pathologist prior to performing the necropsy is recommended.

A completed necropsy form should accompany all cases submitted for necropsy (forms are available for download under specimen submission). Please provide as much of the following information as possible:

- A concise statement of the patient’s clinical complaint and present history
- An appropriate past history including any medications and/or prior treatments
- The clinical diagnoses or a list of differential diagnoses
- Any recent clinical laboratory testing and/or results of diagnostic imaging
- A thorough description of any abnormal findings on gross examination
- Notification of possible zoonotic disease risk, if suspected

Note: submission of photographs is encouraged, but this should not take the place of a written description of gross findings. Photos can either be mailed with tissues or emailed to info@specialtyvetpath.com

When necropsy will be delayed more than 1 hour, the body should be kept chilled to delay autolysis. If adequate refrigerated space is not available, bodies can be packed with ice or ice packs. Freeze artifact can obscure or destroy important lesions, and should be avoided whenever possible.

Highly recommended: King, Dodd, Newson, and Roth. 2006. *The Necropsy Book*. 4th edition. Charles L. Davis DVM Foundation, Maryland.

Please contact Dr. Ward at 206-245-8426 if you have a case you would like to discuss prior to necropsy.