

RENAL BIOPSY TISSUE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



This FAQ will provide you with information on how to stabilize renal biopsy tissue specimens to ensure that it arrives at our laboratory without degradation of the specimen. For comprehensive instructions outlining the appropriate steps to submit renal biopsy tissue to Michigan Medicine Laboratories (MLabs) refer to the Renal Biopsy Tissue Submission Protocol. If you need further assistance, please contact our MLabs Client Services Center 800.862.7284.

Question: I am not a client; can I send my own kit?

Answer: No. Please contact MLabs Client Services to receive onboarding, training, and our MLabs collection kit prior to collecting and sending a specimen. This process ensures the biopsy tissue you send to us meets our specimen requirements and remains stable in shipment to our facility.

Question: When can I send a tissue biopsy specimen to Michigan Medicine Laboratories (MLabs)?

Answer: Specimens should be shipped or transported to arrive Monday – Friday by 5:00 PM, excluding holidays. Specimens cannot be accepted during observed Michigan Medicine holidays. Please contact MLabs Client Services for observed holiday dates and hours. Specimens that cannot be shipped for arrival within these timeframes should be stored according to the submission protocol until ready to ship.

Question: Do I need to notify MLabs Client Services prior to sending a tissue biopsy specimen?

Answer: Yes, our MLabs Client Services team assists in obtaining the appropriate documentation and specimen tracking to our facility.

Question: Can I send tissue biopsy specimens if I do not have all the required information?

Answer: Sending the specimen(s) with completed documentation (e.g., lab results, contact information, etc.) is a requirement to submit surgical pathology specimens to Michigan Medicine Laboratories. If you do not have completed documentation, hold the specimen(s) until all required information is obtained and can be sent to our facility with the specimen(s). The specimen(s) should arrive to Michigan Medicine Laboratories within 72 hours.

Question: Does glutaraldehyde fixative need to be stored and shipped refrigerated?

Answer: Glutaraldehyde fixative must be refrigerated until ready to ship and during storage and transport of the specimen. Samples should be shipped or transported to arrive within 24 hours. The entire kit can be refrigerated.

Question: The surgical pathology specimen placed into the glutaraldehyde fixative was stored at room temperature over the weekend. Can I still send the specimen to your laboratory?

Answer: No. The specimen containing glutaraldehyde fixative must be refrigerated during storage and transport of the specimens.

Question: From the time a renal biopsy is accessioned at Michigan Medicine, on average, when can we expect a final surgical pathology report?

Answer: The average turnaround time depends on the complexity of the case. Transplant cases are typically signed out within three business days and native biopsies typically result within five business days. Cases that need additional studies or consultation may require a longer turnaround time.

RENAL BIOPSY TISSUE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Question: I accidentally placed all the renal cores into the glutaraldehyde fixative. Can I still send the specimens?

Answer: If the cores have only been in the glutaraldehyde fixative for a short time (minutes), then retrieve the cores and rinse them with saline before putting them in the correct solutions. Document what happened - light microscopy may show a processing artifact, and immunofluorescence may be less effective or uninformative. If the cores have been fixing for over an hour, send them as-is.

Question: Is it acceptable to send core biopsies in RPMI medium?

Answer: No, acceptable fixatives are formalin, glutaraldehyde, and Zeus/Michel's.

Question: If I have tissue in aldehyde fixatives can it be used for the immunofluorescence microscopy?

Answer: No, tissue placed in aldehyde fixatives cannot be used for routine fluorescence microscopy and should not be transferred to the immunofluorescence media. However, in cases with inadequate or no tissue for routine immunofluorescence, pronase digestion and fluorescence microscopy can be performed on the paraffin tissue by special request.

Question: How long are renal tissue biopsy specimens stable when stored in the appropriate fixatives and conditions?

Answer: Please send the specimens to Michigan Medicine Laboratories within 72 hours. Fixation for longer than 72 hours tends to make the cores brittle, and they can crack when sectioned.

Question: How long are renal biopsy specimens stored at Michigan Medicine Laboratories?

Answer: FFPE tissue blocks for light microscopy are stored indefinitely in the UM pathology archive. Tissue for immunofluorescence is stored for one year before being archived. Tissue for EM is stored indefinitely in epoxy blocks if ultrastructural examination is performed but is discarded after one year if it is not performed.