Processing of Special Tissue Submissions

Skin Punches:
- if punches are 3 millimeters or smaller they will be processed as submitted
- if punches are larger than 3 millimeters, they will be bi-sected along the direction of hair (if able to determine)
- the pathologist will receive a written comment from the histotechnician trimming the sample for any given description of location of submitted samples on the body of the animal (sample site) and any identification used for samples by the referring veterinarian (use ink or suture material to indicate orientation, e.g. cranial and lateral)
- any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Toes:
- if the area of concern is in the soft tissue, it will be processed immediately according to our “Standard Trimming Method” and submitted to the pathologist
- if the area of concern is the NAIL BED, then soft tissue will be cut along the nail and along the bone
- while bone sections are being processed, a preliminary report will be issued for a fast turn-around diagnosis
- on every submitted toe we will cut a cross section through the proximal bone for margin evaluation and a longitudinal section through the length of bone to investigate bone involvement
- these bone containing sections of the toe have to be decalcified prior to further processing which requires additional time
- if the area of concern is not in the soft tissue, the whole case will be submitted to the pathologist after decalcification and no preliminary report will be issued
- any extra soft tissue removed along the lateral sides to reduce decalcifying time will be saved in the original container
- any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Tails:
- if the area of concern is in the soft tissue, it will be processed immediately according to our “Standard Trimming Method” and submitted to the pathologist
- while bone sections are being processed, a preliminary report will be issued for a fast turn-around diagnosis
- if the area of concern is not in the soft tissue, the whole case will be submitted to the pathologist after decalcification and no preliminary report will be issued
- the tail will be decalcified
- a cross section will be cut through the proximal bone for margin evaluation
- additional sections will be cut through the area of concern
- any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Teeth:
- if the area of concern is in the soft tissue, it will be processed immediately according to our “Standard Trimming Method” and submitted to the pathologist
• while teeth sections are being processed, a preliminary report will be issued for a fast turn-around diagnosis
• if the area of concern is not in the soft tissue, the whole case will be submitted to the pathologist after decalcification and no preliminary report will be issued
• the tooth/teeth will be decalcified
• a longitudinal section will be cut to show the tooth root associated with any surrounding tissue
• any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Bone:
• if the area of concern is in the soft tissue, it will be processed immediately according to our “Standard Trimming Method” and submitted to the pathologist
• while bone sections are being processed, a preliminary report will be issued for a fast turn-around diagnosis
• if the area of concern is not in the soft tissue, the whole case will be submitted to the pathologist after decalcification and no preliminary report will be issued
• a cross section will be cut through the proximal bone (and the distal bone depending on the location) for margin evaluation
• a cross section will be cut through the area of concern to show bone involvement and any surrounding tissue
• any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Hooves:
• the hoof will be softened in 5% potassium hydroxide solution prior to processing
• longitudinal sections of the area of interest will be cut
• any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Bone Marrow:
• all bone marrow biopsy cores will be processed through a short decalcification step
• the whole sample will be processed and submitted to a clinical pathologist who specializes in bone marrow biopsies

Eyes:
• if the area of concern is in the soft tissue surrounding the globe, it will be processed immediately according to our “Standard Trimming Method” and submitted to the pathologist
• if the globe is the only tissue of interest, we recommend that the submitter removes the surrounding tissue prior to fixation and submission
• for eyes with tumors we bi-sect the eye to demonstrate the tumor
• for eyes with no obvious tumor we follow the following procedure:
  • we locate the large vein on the back of the eye
  • we cut the globe perpendicular to the vein offsetting the globe from the optical disc and or nerve
  • we cut a small window in the top of the globe for better processing and submit this portion of the globe for further processing
• any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Gastrointestinal Tract:
• cross sections will be cut to demonstrate the muscle layer and mucosal layer along with any areas of interest
• cross sections from proximal and distal margins of the sample will be cut

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endoscopic biopsies should be submitted in a cassette with foam inserts (we can provide these to you) and will be processed as submitted (the histotechnician will attempt correct orientation in the block)

any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Heart:

- if the whole heart is submitted with the large vessels attached, we can perform a Turks test if requested to determine if an underlying cardiomyopathy is present
- valves are not routinely trimmed unless upon a pathologists/clients request
- any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Spleen:

- we will cut cross sections through spleen so that the area of interest is present in the section along with some adjacent healthy tissue
- for splenic nodules, cross sections through the nodule and the normal appearing surrounding tissue are trimmed
- splenic masses often require large numbers of samples to exclude a hemangiosarcoma, it is important to submit sufficient normal appearing tissue along the margin of the nodule along with multiple sections of the nodule for a detailed examination
- any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Reproductive Organs:

- ovaries, testes, placentas and uteri will be examined grossly by our specialist in reproductive tract pathology prior to trimming
- sections will be trimmed by the specialist according to the presenting alterations
- any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed

Brain:

- if a whole brain is submitted, it will be examined grossly by one of our pathologists
- sections will be trimmed by the pathologist according to the presenting alterations
- any untrimmed tissue will remain for 2 weeks in formalin for additional sections if needed