

## I. *Submitting a Body Fluid Specimen for Cytology Examination*

**Specimen Container Labeling:** Laboratory compliance standards require that each container (*not* the lid) be labeled with two unique patient identifiers, typically name and date of birth, as well as the specimen type and submitting provider.

**As a general rule, never place a cytology specimen into formalin.**

- **Urine/ Bladder wash/Loop urine:** In general, a first morning urine specimen produces an inferior specimen for cytological examination, as the cells present in the urine have extensively degraded. The best specimens typically are from a well-hydrated patient who has already voided at least 1-2 times on the day of collection. Specimens can be submitted unfixed, or in Cytolyt® preservative solution, which is an alcohol-based fixative. If the specimen is not placed into Cytolyt® preservative, it must be refrigerated until it is picked up by the courier. Submit the specimen with a completed Vista Pathology Laboratory's non-gyn cytology requisition form and include the information listed below in "Completing a Vista Non-Gynecologic Cytology Requisition."
- **Body Fluids and Washes (Pleural, Pericardial, Ascites, Joint Aspirate, Bronchial Wash, BAL, etc.) and Sputum:** Specimens typically are submitted fresh (unfixed) in a sterile container. These should be refrigerated until picked up by the courier. Use Vista Pathology Laboratory's non-gyn cytology requisition and include the information listed below in "Completing a Vista Non-Gynecologic Cytology Requisition."
- **Nipple Discharge:** Nipple discharge is expressed directly on to a charged glass slide and gently spread with a second slide. The slide with the specimen can then be either fixed in 95% alcohol or air-dried. Use Vista Pathology Laboratory's non-gyn cytology requisition and include the information listed below in "Completing a Vista Non-Gynecologic Cytology Requisition."
- **CSF:** This is a delicate specimen that requires careful handling. It is generally submitted unfixed so that low cellularity is not further diluted by fixative. CSF must be refrigerated until courier pick-up. If a CSF is collected on a Friday, please contact Vista Pathology Laboratory to arrange a same-day pick-up. Use Vista Pathology Laboratory's non-gyn cytology requisition and include the information listed below in "Completing a Vista Pathology Laboratory Non-Gynecologic Cytology Requisition Form."
- **Fine Needle Aspiration Biopsy (FNA):** A specimen is collected with a thin (23-27) gauge needle attached to a syringe. The aspirated material is then expressed onto a charged glass slide and gently spread with a second slide. These slides can be fixed in 95% alcohol or air-dried. Cyst fluid and needle rinses may be collected into saline or Cytolyt®; specimens in saline must be refrigerated. Each glass slide must be labeled with two patient identifiers. Providers unfamiliar with FNA techniques are encouraged

to contact Vista Pathology Laboratory for more detailed specimen collection instructions. Use Vista Pathology Laboratory's non-gyn cytology requisition and include the information listed below in "Completing a Vista Non-Gynecologic Cytology Requisition."

## ***II. Completing a Vista Non-Gynecologic Cytology Requisition Form***

All areas of the requisition slip must be completed legibly. Please include the following information:

- Patient name and date of birth.
- Submitting provider.
- Gender.
- Date collected.
- Specimen source and specifications such as "Left" or "Right." Check the appropriate box describing the specimen you are submitting.
- Pertinent clinical history.
- ICD-10 code.

Attach the patient demographic and insurance information to the requisition slip.