



# Tips for Specimen Submission to the SWOG Biospecimen Bank



Hannah Brown

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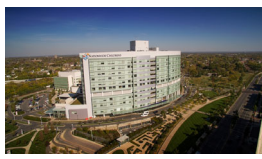
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## Overview of the Biopathology Center (BPC)

- The SWOG Biospecimen Bank is part of the Biopathology Center at The Abigail Wexner Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital
- Our operations are largely grant/contract supported
- We serve as the biorepository for several other major cooperative groups and organizations:
  - Children's Oncology Group (COG)
  - NRG Oncology
  - GOG Foundation
  - SWOG
  - Sarcoma Alliance for Research through Collaboration (SARC)
  - Experimental Therapeutics Clinical Trials Network (ETCTN)




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## Specimen Receipt

- On an average day, the whole Bank receives 70-110 packages, which may contain upwards of 1,000 specimens!
- We receive several different specimen types:
  - Paraffin materials (FFPE blocks, slides)
  - Fresh blood, bone marrow, and urine
  - Frozen blood products and urine
  - Frozen tissue
- We can receive all specimen types Monday – Friday
  - Shipments of fresh blood and bone marrow may also be received on Saturday for immediate processing
- Accurate specimen submission is crucial to our day to day operations

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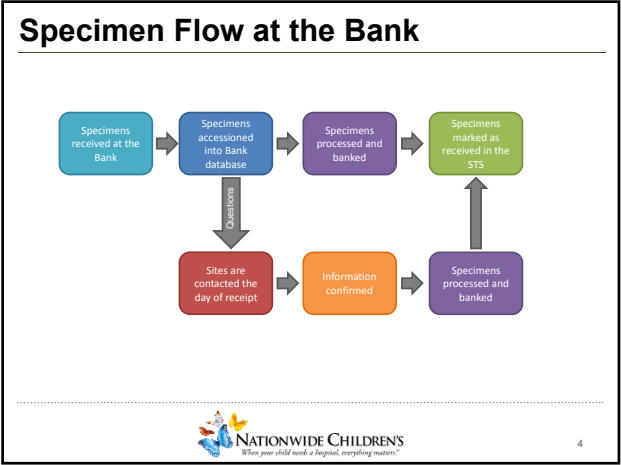
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### Common Specimen Quality Issues

Issue	Prevention
Specimen that should be frozen arrived thawed or with insufficient dry ice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose an appropriately-sized container (Goldilocks rule)</li> <li>Add dry ice to the bottom ~1/3, add the specimens, and then add dry ice to the top of the insulated container</li> </ul>
Blood / bone marrow is hemolyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not shake or vortex blood to mix with the anticoagulant</li> <li>Gently invert tube 8 – 10 times after collection</li> </ul>
Blood / bone marrow is clotted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thoroughly mix the specimen with anticoagulant in the tube immediately after collection</li> <li>Gently invert tube 8 – 10 times after collection</li> </ul>
Specimen arrived in a cracked, broken, or leaking container	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not freeze glass tubes – always use plastic collection tubes if submitting frozen specimens</li> <li>Do not overfill cryovials (*1.5 mL liquid can be frozen in a 2-mL cryovial)</li> <li>Package specimens carefully – if it rattles, don't ship it!</li> <li>Get friendly with bubble wrap – it's both a good insulator and specimen protectant</li> <li>Do not ship cracked, broken, or leaking specimens</li> </ul>
Incorrect specimen type received (e.g., protocol indicates to send whole blood, and blood arrives processed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the protocol</li> <li>If the protocol is unclear – email the Bank</li> </ul>

When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™

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### Common Shipment Issues

Issue	Prevention
Missing Paperwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>STS packing list is <i>always</i> required</li> <li>Pathology reports are required for all formalin-fixed paraffin-embedded (FFPE) tissue submissions – including blocks, slides, and scrolls</li> </ul>
Missing information on specimen label	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include all required labeling information on all specimens submitted</li> <li>Refer to protocol for any protocol-specific labeling requirements</li> </ul>
STS Packing List does not match specimens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All specimen labeling information (identifiers, collection date, etc.) must correspond with the information entered in the STS</li> <li>The number of specimens (e.g., number of tubes, vials, glass slides, etc.) received must match the STS packing list</li> </ul>
Insufficient dry ice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include lots of dry ice <i>all year round</i></li> </ul>

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### Specimen Labeling Requirements

Label all specimens with the following:



- SWOG patient #
- Patient Initials
- Date of specimen collection
- Specimen type (whole blood, serum, etc.)

Additional labeling for FFPE tissue blocks and slides

- Tissue type: Primary, Metastatic, Normal
- Surgical pathology ID (SPID or Accession #)
- Block Number (from pathology report)

Note: Any missing information will result in the Bank contacting the submitting institution, which can delay specimen processing, and may require a waiver.

*We cannot assume any information!*

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### Labeling Templates

- Specimen Labels, Avery 5160
- Every specimen submitted must be labeled!

*Large Specimen Labels (Tissue/Pathologic Specimens)*

Patient #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Patient Initials: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Collection Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Tissue Type (P,M,N): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Surg Path #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Block #: \_\_\_\_\_

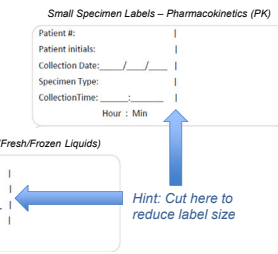

*Small Specimen Labels – Pharmacokinetics (PK)*

Patient #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Patient initials: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Collection Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Specimen Type: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Collection Time: \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_  
 Hour : Min

*Small Specimen Labels (Fresh/Frozen Liquids)*

Patient #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Patient Initials: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Collection Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Specimen Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Hint: Cut here to reduce label size

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### Preparing the shipment...

- Verify that **all specimen labels** include **all required information** listed in the protocol (if applicable), or include all requirements on the SWOG Biospecimen Resources webpage (see Helpful Sites)
- Verify that the information on **STS packing list matches the specimens**
  - Double check specimen label information (e.g., collection dates)
  - Ensure that the number of specimens matches the number on the STS packing list (e.g., if sending 2 10-mL tubes of blood, quantity = 2, not 20)
- Confirm that all **required paperwork** is included
  - STS Packing List
  - Redacted Pathology Report (FFPE tissue only)
    - Do not remove surgical pathology ID (SPID), block number, collection date, diagnosis, results, gross description, or other information about the specimen
    - Additional guidelines will be posted to the SWOG website
  - Confirm that the registration number is included on all paperwork



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### Shipping Considerations

- Batching specimen shipments – unless otherwise stated in the protocol, frozen specimens or FFPE tissues (blocks, slides, or scrolls) may be batched. As a general guideline, do not include more than 5 patients in one shipment.
  - Package each patient’s specimens separately
  - If there are multiple time points per patient, then include fewer than 5 patients in the shipment.
- Pack specimens according to the season
  - Frozen Specimens: ALWAYS include plenty of dry ice to prevent specimens from thawing
  - Warmer months (around April – September):
    - Ambient specimens: Include a cold pack (not frozen!), unless otherwise stated in the protocol and/or kit instructions (e.g., cfDNA Streck tubes)
  - Colder months (around October – March):
    - Ambient specimens: Insulate well (e.g., bubble wrap) to prevent specimens from freezing
- Specimens shipped **FedEx Priority Overnight** arrive to the Bank at the beginning of the day – other carriers or shipping methods may delay receipt.

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### Helpful Sites


**SWOG Biospecimen Processing and Submission Procedures**

- General SWOG specimen submission guidelines, links to labeling templates, and more!
- <https://www.swog.org/clinical-trials/biospecimen-resources/biospecimen-processing-and-submission-procedures>

**BPC Kit Management**

- Order biospecimen collection kits (when provided, refer to protocol) – select SWOG sponsor group
- Users must be registered
- <https://ricapps.nationwidechildrens.org/KitManagement>

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### Contact Information

<p><b><u>Solid Tissue, Myeloma &amp; Lymphoma Division</u></b></p> <p>SWOG Biospecimen Bank #201 614-722-2865 <a href="mailto:bpcbank@nationwidechildrens.org">bpcbank@nationwidechildrens.org</a></p> <p>SWOG Biospecimen Bank Nationwide Children’s Hospital 700 Children’s Drive, WA1340 Columbus, Ohio 43205</p>	<p><b><u>Leukemia Division</u></b></p> <p>SWOG Biospecimen Bank #200 614-722-2866 <a href="mailto:mglab@nationwidechildrens.org">mglab@nationwidechildrens.org</a></p> <p>SWOG Biospecimen Bank Nationwide Children’s Hospital 575 Children’s Crossroad, WB2255 Columbus, Ohio 43215</p>
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**Questions?**



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 **NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S**  
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