

## Specimen Handling Guidelines for Formalin-Fixed Paraffin-Embedded (FFPE) Tissue

If protocol-specific tissue handling instructions for FFPE tissue are not provided in the protocol or through a linked resource (usually in Section 15 in SWOG-led protocols), then follow the instructions outlined below.

### Fixing Tissue in Formalin

1. Place the fresh tissue in formalin. **Do not exceed 24 hours fixation time.**
2. Fixed tissue must be processed and embedded in paraffin within 24 hours. Follow institutional procedures for tissue processing and embedding.

### FFPE Tissue Slides

- FFPE tissue slides are tissue sliced from an FFPE tissue block and mounted to a glass slide.
  - These vary in thickness and are typically 4-7  $\mu\text{m}$  (microns)
- Slides often may be submitted if the institution cannot release an FFPE tissue block, but this is dependent on the protocol.
- To submit FFPE tissue slides, cut sequential sections from the representative FFPE tissue block as indicated in the protocol.
  - If these instructions are not in the protocol, then cut slides at 4-5  $\mu\text{m}$  (“micron”) thickness on positively charged slides.
- Slides may be stained or unstained. Unstained slides can be positively-charged (often indicated with a + or X – see figure) or uncharged.
  - If not specified in the protocol, then charged slides are preferred.



### FFPE Tissue Scrolls (or curls)

1. Scrolls (also called curls) are FFPE tissue sections that are not mounted to glass slides. These are often thicker sections of tissue (e.g., 10 – 20 micron thickness).
2. Add scrolls to a small flat-bottom or conical tube.



### Storage of FFPE tissue

1. Store FFPE tissue blocks and slides at room temperature until shipment.

### Required Documents for Shipping FFPE Tissue Blocks and Slides:

2. Corresponding **pathology report** indicating the morphological diagnosis. The report must be labeled with the SWOG Participant ID # and surgical pathology identification number.
3. SWOG Online Specimen Tracking System Packing List.
  - a. Note: for quantity of specimens, list the quantities of stained and unstained slides separately.

### Biospecimen Bank Retention of FFPE Tissue Blocks and Slides:

**FFPE tissue blocks and slides submitted for translational medicine or biobanking will not be returned.** If the tissue is needed for participant care, approval for release of the FFPE tissue block or slides must be obtained from Dr. Jimmy Rae before the block can be returned.