



SENTINEL LYMPH NODE PROTOCOL

This protocol is to be implemented in cases of breast cancer in which a lumpectomy and axillary lymph node biopsy is being performed and the procedural decision is whether or not to perform a formal axillary dissection.

* This protocol does not apply to diagnostic lymph node biopsies in which a lymphoma or an infectious process is suspected. In these cases, the standard **LYMPH NODE PROTOCOL** should be implemented.

SCHEDULING

Cases in which sentinel lymph nodes will need to be examined at the time of a surgical procedure should be scheduled ahead of time by calling Pacific Pathology Associates at (503) 561-5350. A follow-up reminder phone call should be made one hour prior to the procedure.

REQUISITION

A Pathology Requisition form is filled out as usual with the following additional specifications:

1. Operating Room call back phone number
2. "Sentinel Lymph Node (right or left) #"

SPECIMEN PREPARATION

1. The lymph node is collected and wrapped in gauze moistened with sterile saline solution (the lymph node should **not** be floating in saline).
2. The lymph node is sent IMMEDIATELY to the laboratory with the requisition form.
3. Subsequent sentinel nodes collected are sequentially labeled and sent as above.
4. If a subsequent axillary dissection is performed, this specimen should be labeled "Axillary Contents" (right or left as appropriate) and not "Sentinel Lymph Nodes".

Pathology Policy reviewed June 30, 2009, no changes to previous policy dated Nov. 1, 2005.
By Mark J. Magilner, MD

For questions, please call the pathologist on call at (503) 561-5350.
For courier services or supplies, please call (503) 561-5390.