

# An Update on Neutral Buffered Formalin Fixation



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The College of American Pathologists (CAP) recommendation for all breast specimens is they be placed in formalin within one hour of removal from the patient and fix for at least 6 hours. Currently, there is no standard or mandatory recommendation for specimens from other organs. However, there is a standard specimen handling recommendation by the CAP for immunohistochemistry (IHC) which recommends a minimum fixation time of 6 hours for small specimens and 24 hours for specimens larger than 4 mm. In order to improve and deliver consistent and high quality IHC staining, and in anticipation of possible upcoming CAP guidelines, Histology and Surgical Pathology at the University of Vermont Medical Center began adhering to this recommendation on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017. In addition, we replaced Zinc Formalin in our tissue processor with 10 % Neutral Buffered Formalin which began on July 14, 2017. This standardizes us with our network partners.

The majority of our specimens already meet the above criteria. We have been monitoring turn-around times for client hospitals and have not identified any concerns or worrisome trends in regards to both the fixation recommendation time and change to zinc formalin solution.

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