

Policy on Excised Tissue

Policy:

All tissue removed from the oral and maxillofacial region of human patients should be submitted to a pathology laboratory for examination. Microscopic examination of such tissues should be performed by an oral and maxillofacial pathologist, certified by the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology. Tissues possibly exempt from the requirement of submission to a laboratory includes:

1. Clinically normal appearing extracted teeth.
2. Clinically normal appearing extirpated dental pulp tissue.
3. Clinically normal appearing tissue.
4. Excess donor tissue resulting from tissue grafting procedures.

Clinical judgment and experience should guide a clinician in this matter. Clinically or radiographically abnormal hard and soft tissue, should be submitted for histopathologic examination. Gross description of all removed tissues should be entered into the patient's dental/medical record by the attending dentist/physician.

The pathology laboratory will prepare and transmit to the attending doctor a written surgical pathology report.

Rationale:

Submission of removed tissues to a pathology laboratory offers the opportunity to:

1. Confirm a provisional clinical diagnosis.
2. Establish a definitive diagnosis to aid in the management of disease.
3. Establish the adequacy of surgical margins.
4. Provide prognostic information.

Knowledge gained through microscopic examination is useful in estimating clinical behavior and prognosis of disease, and in assessing the need for any additional therapy and follow-up evaluation. Submission of removed tissues to a pathology laboratory for examination and diagnosis constitutes the standard of patient care. The pathology report validates patient management decisions, increases the likelihood of positive clinical outcomes, and substantiates the patient record in the medico-legal context.