



Brain Preparation and Shipping Instructions

These instructions are intended to be used by a hospital pathologist, a forensic autopsy technician, a funeral director, or someone similar.

Fixative

The typical and preferred fixative is 10% Neutral Buffered Formalin. Other similar fixatives are acceptable. Arterial embalming fluid may be used if formalin is not available.

Perfusion Apparatus

Perfusion may not be possible if blood coagulation has already taken place. Gentle gravity perfusion is preferred. 100 mmHg of pressure may be generated by positioning a container of liquid 4 ft. above the body with the tubing leading down to the cannula. If that is not possible, an embalming pump may be used on slow speed. The tubing should ideally split in a Y to lead to both carotid arteries. If that is not possible, the arteries may be perfused one at a time.

Perfusion

Make long incisions on both sides of the neck to gain access to both carotid arteries and both jugular veins. Make sure no bubbles are in the lines, begin slow flow, then insert the cannulas into both carotids. Increase the flow, and then cut the jugular veins to allow effluent to drain. Treat this as a diffusion process rather than a flushing process. In other words, proceed slowly and over a longer time period in order to give time for the formaldehyde to penetrate into the tissue. Flushing first with saline prior to formalin may help with washout of the blood cells.

Surgical

Remove the brain from the skull in the usual manner, being as gentle as possible. Take special care not to make cuts in the brain. This is done by cutting 90-100% through the bone thickness, but relying on completing the final separation by cracking with a lever.

Immersion

If perfusion was very successful, immersion is less important and might possibly be skipped. If no perfusion was performed, then immerse in formalin for two weeks. Place container of formalin with brain into a refrigerator if at all possible. It is standard to hang from a string by the basilar artery and change the formalin regularly, depending on volume.

Shipping

We will send out a shipping container.

1. Drain liquid from brain
2. Place in provided two gallon Ziploc bag. Squeeze air out, and seal bag.
3. Place in the 1.25 gallon plastic container, and surround with absorbent padding. Screw on lid tightly.
4. Pack the plastic container into the original cardboard box using the original packing material. Tape.
5. Affix our prepaid return label. Send.

Questions

If you have questions about the instructions above, you can call us anytime.