



RAPID GUIDE TO CYTOLOGY SPECIMEN FIXATION

To preserve cells in a sample for cytologic examination, the following preservatives must be used:

Specimen Source	Preferred Fixative	Alternate Fixative	Refrigeration Yes/No
Breast Discharge Smear	Cytology Rich Red	95% Ethyl Alcohol	No
Breast Aspiration Smear	Cytology Rich Red	95% Ethyl Alcohol	No
Breast Aspiration Fluid	Cyto Rich Red	None	No
Bronchial Brush	Cyto Rich Red	None	No
Bronchial Wash	Cyto Rich Red	None	No
Bronchial Lavage	Cyto Rich Red	None	No
CSF	Fresh	Cyto Rich Red (If unable to bring to Lab immediately)	Yes
FNA Smears	Cytology Fixative (Aerosol)	95% Ethyl Alcohol	No
FNA Fluids	Cyto Rich Red	None	No
Gastric Brush	Cyto Rich Red	None	No
Peritoneal Fluid	Fresh	Cyto Rich Red	Yes
Pleural Fluid	Fresh	Cyto Rich Red	Yes
Thin Layer Pap	Surepath	None	No
Sputum	Cyto Rich Red	None	No
Tzank Smear	Cytology Fixative (Aerosol)	95% Ethyl Alcohol	No
Urine	Fresh	Cyto Rich Red (If held more than 48 hours)	No
Wash/Lavage (All)	Cyto Rich Red	None	No

Cyto Rich Red = Red Fixative

Reference: VRH Department of Cytology, 10/07