



RETURN OF HUMAN TISSUE - INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS & WHANAU

Return to Patient Service

What happens to tissue in the laboratory and what to expect when it is returned to you.

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What will happen to my tissue?

Ka ahatia tōku kikokiko

Before your procedure, your doctor will give you some information to help you decide whether or not to keep your tissue after testing. This is part of your informed consent for the procedure.

After removal, your tissue will be placed in formalin preservative. All human tissue is treated with respect. In the laboratory, the tissue will be sliced for closer examination. Very thin slices of some tissue will be placed onto microscope slides.

An Anatomical Pathologist (specialist doctor) will examine your tissue under a microscope. The results will be sent to your doctor who will then give them to you.

You can ask the requesting doctor, or your family doctor (GP) to explain the results.

What will my tissue look like after testing?

Ka pēhea to āhua o tōku kikokiko i muri i te whakamātau?

After processing and testing, your tissue may not look like it did when it was removed:

The formalin preservative may have caused the tissue to change colour.

Small pieces will be missing as these have been processed and placed on microscope slides for examination by the Anatomical Pathologist. These pieces are kept in the laboratory for:

Review at a later date

Assist a family member with a similar problem
Possible inclusion in audits of the laboratory to ensure high standards are maintained.

If the sample taken was very small it may have been all used to make the slides. If this is the case, you may still ask for the slides if you wish.

How do I collect my tissue?

Me pēhea to tāmata i tōku kikokiko?

When your tissue is ready for collection, you will receive a letter, with instructions on how to make an appointment to pick up your tissue. Please give a days' notice for preparations to be made. You are required to bring one form of photo identification or you can arrange another person to pick up your tissue on your behalf.

We understand that some people may require cultural or spiritual support. Please contact your GP for further details.

Important information about handling your tissue

He pārongo nui mō te whāwhā i kikokiko

Your returned tissue has been placed in formalin preservative for processing. Prior to returning your tissue the formalin is washed off, but some will remain in your tissue. Formalin is a poisonous substance that can irritate your skin, eyes, nose and mouth.

Your tissue has been dried as much as possible and placed in a clear, sealed plastic pocket. This is wrapped in cotton wool and placed in a named box. The box is placed in a bag, together with a pair of gloves. Please wear the gloves if handling the tissue. Gloves should be bagged before being placed in your household rubbish.

As your tissue has been preserved, there is no need to store in a fridge or freezer

Burying your tissue

Te nehu i tō kikokiko

You can make arrangements for burial at a cemetery or cremation.

You can bury your tissue in the earth at a private property such as your home.

It should be buried at a depth to prevent access to animals and so it cannot contaminate near surface soil.

It is best to tear the bag once it is in the earth to allow the soil / bacteria into the tissue.

Handling the tissue may expose you to residual formalin.