

## Head and Neck Pathology Grossing Guidelines

### Do not cut any HN specimens unless you are fully oriented anatomically

- Orient by anatomic structures (oral tongue, junction of buccal/gingival mucosa, alveolar ridge, angle of jaw, hard palate, etc)
- For mandibulectomies/maxillectomies, please ask for help if unsure
- Ink resection margins
- Describe all abnormalities: size (*staging cutoffs: 2 cm, 4 cm*), location, extent, depth (*staging cutoffs: 0.5 cm, 1 cm*), distance to margins
- Sample all margins (if grossly close, e.g. 1 cm, submit perpendicular section; otherwise submit a shave of the margin closest to tumor)
- Sample tumor:
  - Show relationship to peripheral/deep margins
  - Show maximum depth of invasion
- Specimens containing mandible or maxilla:
  - Bone margins
  - Sections of bone adjacent to tumor or gross involvement of bone
- Diagrams and gross photos are appreciated

**Specimen Type:** HEAD AND NECK LYMPH NODE DISSECTION (refer to radical neck dissection guidelines, if necessary)

- Submit all lymph nodes
  - Note: an adequate lymph node dissection should include 20 lymph nodes.
  - After submitting all grossly identified lymph nodes, submit the remainder of the fibroadipose tissue and/or soft tissue.
    - There is no need to submit the entire salivary gland if received as part of the dissection.
- For grossly positive nodes:
  - Describe size of metastatic focus (*staging cutoffs: 3 cm, 6 cm*) and if extranodal extension is present grossly.

### **Gross Template:**

Labeled with the patient's name (last name, first name), medical record number (#), designated "\*\*\*", and received [*fresh/in formalin*] is a \*\*\* x \*\*\* x \*\*\* cm portion of tan-brown soft tissue. Sectioning reveals [*describe number/size of lymph nodes identified*]. The salivary gland is sectioned to reveal [*describe cut surface, if received as part of the dissection*]. The entire specimen is submitted [*or All identified lymph nodes and the remaining soft tissue is submitted*].

### **Cassette Submission:** 5-15 cassettes

- Submit all lymph nodes
- Submit remainder of soft tissue and/or fibroadipose tissue
- Large nodes (including matted nodes), 1/cm including one full cross section, to include largest focus of tumor and suspicious areas for extranodal extension
- One representative section of submandibular gland (submit more if involved by tumor; make sure to section)