

Health and Safety Rules for Students in the Dissecting Room

There are some rules that are enforced for the safety of the staff and students, while others are concerned with the need for care and respect of the prosection material.

General courtesy

- Students are required to attend **each lecture and the assigned tutorial/laboratory class** unless given special permission. Provision of an appropriate medical certificate to the course authority will be required for any Special Consideration.
- You may **enter** and **view** specimens in the Dissecting Room 101 **only** in the presence of your tutor and/or during your designated tutorial/laboratory class hours. You are **not permitted** to take visitors into the Dissection Room.

Health and Safety Rules

A detailed risk assessment for student activities in the Dissecting Room is located on the notice board at the front entrance (near 1st floor lifts).

When in the Dissecting Room, you are required to:

- **always put on your laboratory coat** when you enter the lab. If you have forgotten to bring your lab coat, purchase a disposable coat from the ground floor in WW building or the Union shops on campus. Lab coats must not be worn in the hall or anywhere outside the laboratories.
- **wear covered shoes with enclosed heels**, never thongs or sandals.
- **wear latex or vinyl gloves** when touching wet specimens (gloves are available from the Union Shop near CLB theatres).
- **never eat or drink.**
- **never put anything in your mouth.** For example, pens or pencils that you may have picked up from the table.
- **avoid inhaling** preservative solutions for prolonged periods. If you feel in need of fresh air, ask permission to leave the laboratory for a few minutes.
- **report all accidents** or incidents immediately to a staff member for assessment without exception. Injuries involving sharps or needle-stick will require a blood test as soon as possible.

At the end of your laboratory class:

- **cover wet specimens** with the towels provided. Make sure that towels do not hang over the edge of the table, because this allows fluid to drip onto the floor. Fluids on the floor are a major safety hazard and should be reported to staff immediately.
- **replace stools** under the tables in your cubicle.
- **remove your gloves** and dispose in the biowaste bins provided.
- **wash your hands** and instruments thoroughly with the soap provided and dry your hands with the paper towel.
- **remove your laboratory coat** when you leave the dissecting room.

Preservative solution

There are 3 main chemicals used as preservation fluids in the Dissecting Room:

phenoxyethanol (2% in solution); **methylated spirits** (10%) and **formalin** (5%)

The safety data sheets (SDSs) for these chemicals are located by the lab First Aid Kit and also on the notice board outside the lab. Women of reproductive years, and especially those who know they are pregnant, should note that all of these are suspected human reproductive and developmental toxins and therefore may pose a hazard to the unborn

child. In addition, formalin (**formaldehyde** solution) is a human carcinogen. Avoid these chemicals coming into contact with your eyes and skin and they should not be ingested.

Most anatomy specimens are stored in 2% phenoxyethanol, which is classified as relatively non-toxic. You should always wear gloves when handling specimens and must avoid ingestion of this chemical and contact with your skin or eyes. Formaldehyde is reported to cause allergic skin and respiratory effects. The potential for adverse health effects, however, is markedly reduced at the concentrations used for embalming and storage of specimens in the Dissecting Room, i.e., the "formalin" solution is less than 5% of a 37% solution of formaldehyde. The specimens provided for classes are without any formalin and a combination of air extraction and conditioning continuously changes the air in the Dissecting Room.

First Aid

If assistance is needed during office hours you may approach **Room 101** staff for **First Aid. All incidents must be reported.** The First Aid Kit is located on the left wall near the Dissecting Room entrance door. A second First Aid Kit in the east wing on the ledge opposite cubicle E4.

Emergency evacuation

In the case of a fire or other emergency the evacuation alarm will sound. When it sounds for the first time this indicates that everyone should get prepared in case it is necessary to evacuate. When it sounds for the second time, an announcement will be made over the speaker system - **follow these instructions.** Staff will be on hand to supervise any evacuation and the emergency exit is at the south end of the lab, do **not use the lifts.** The evacuation assembly area is the landscaped space immediately to the east of the Chancellery and adjacent to the Clancy Auditorium. **Do not assemble anywhere else** and do not leave this area until instructed.

Additional Safety Information

If additional safety information is required you can ask the course convenor or the Anatomy Dissection Laboratory Manager (Mr Vincent Strack). The latest safety information is always available from the SOMS HS Webpage.

<http://medicalsciences.med.unsw.edu.au/SOMSWeb.nsf/page/Health+and+Safety>

Care and respect of prosected material

You are learning from human material prepared from people who have generously donated their bodies for the benefit of science. Skilled staff members have dissected the specimens to allow you, the student, to see anatomical structures in fine detail. Apart from caring for the specimens, it is important for all students learning Anatomy to have and show **utmost respect** for the specimens at all times, in the Dissecting Room, Room 101, and in the Anatomy Museum Room 105. **Great care** should always be exercised when handling specimens, in order to preserve their delicate structure.

Some specific points:

- **Always use only blunt forceps** to handle specimens and **probes** to point to structures, i.e. **never pull** at any parts of the specimen.
- It is **illegal** for any anatomical material to be removed from the premises of the Department of Anatomy for any purpose whatsoever (except of course, for the funeral). All anatomy specimens are micro-chipped for identification and record keeping.
- Photography and video recording are **not permitted** in the Dissecting Room 101, or the Anatomy Museum 105.