

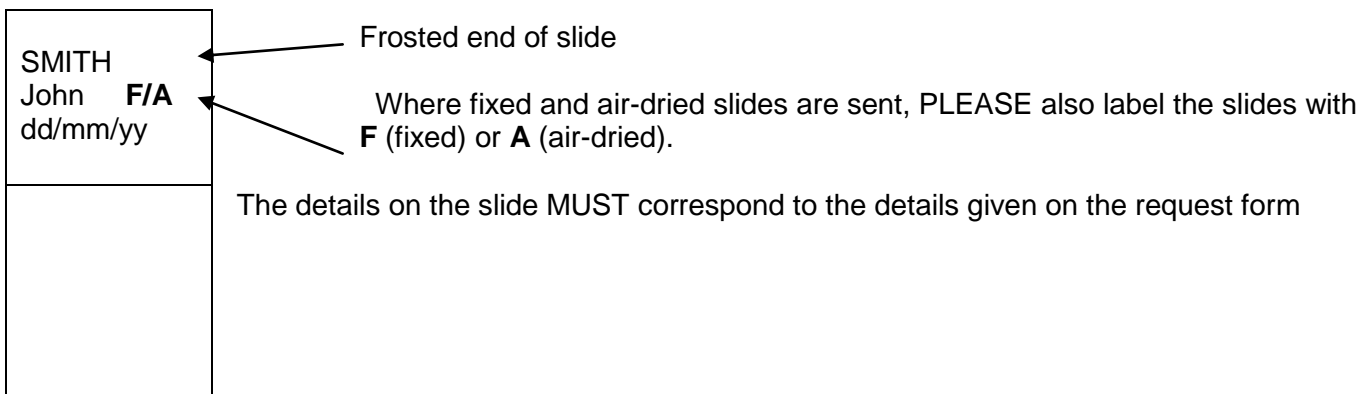
# User guide for the preparation of direct slides for Diagnostic Cytology

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## 1. Labelling Slides

FNA slides must be clearly marked in **PENCIL** on the frosted end (at the top) with the patient's surname, first name and date of birth / hospital number (a minimum requirement of 3 patient identifiers).



## 2. Direct slide preparation



Place 1 small drop of the cell deposit in the centre of a slide about 1cm from the frosted end.

Using a spreader slide make a thin, evenly spread film on the slide without using undue pressure, which may result in crush artefact of the cells.

Air dried slides **MUST** be thinly spread to allow rapid drying.

**It is essential that the slide is fixed or air dried WITHOUT DELAY to preserve cellular integrity of the sample.**

Only two slides for air drying and two slides for wet fixation are necessary. Any surplus material should be placed in a labelled white top universal container.

The syringe and attached needle are washed out in a white top universal containing 10mls of Cytospin collection fluid and sent to the laboratory with the slides.

Cytospin Collection Fluid can be obtained from the Maidstone Hospital Cytology department using the Diagnostic Cytology supplies order form RWF-CP-CYT-F13 which can be sent or e-mailed to [mtw-tr.lbcsupplies@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.lbcsupplies@nhs.net)

### 3. Fixing the smears

**It is essential that the slide is fixed or air dried WITHOUT DELAY to preserve cellular integrity of the sample.**

There are two main fixation methods – wet fixation and air-drying.

**Wet fixation** - Immediately fix the slides using spray fixative. Spray gently to avoid washing material to the edge of the slide.

**Air-dried slides** - wave the slides gently in the air to aid rapid drying.

### 4. Transport to the laboratory

Once fully dry, the FNA slides are placed in plastic slide mailers to minimise the risk of damage.

Fixed and air dried slides should be placed in separate FULLY LABELLED slide mailers.

**Slides and specimens should be sent to the laboratory without delay.**

**Please note, the quality of subsequent staining and ultimately the diagnosis for the patient is very much dependent on the quality of the direct slide preparation and fixation.**