

Introduction

(0.1 Grossing_Manual_Introduction); Updated August 9th, 2019 by Jeremy Deisch, MD

The Loma Linda University Grossing Manual is a set of documents that provide guidance for proper specimen handling, description style, block submission, and approach to AJCC staging (for tumor resections). This manual is intentionally concise, with the idea that shorter entries will be easier for gross room personnel to access and utilize. As such, these entries are not “all encompassing” with regards to approach and background principles for larger complex specimens. For learners that are not competent with a particular tumor type, utilization of other reference materials for a detailed, step-by-step description of how to handle said specimens is recommended.

The grossing manual adheres to a predictable format, with the example dictation (the component that is expected to be used most often) being the first listed, followed by suggested sampling, AJCC grading criteria, and finally additional considerations.

Notice that the gross descriptions for larger specimens should follow a relatively standardized format, with different components being separated paragraphically.

- First paragraph: Specimen labeling (alphabetic designation, name, and specimen source), followed by fixative identification and a global statement of “what was received”, with relevant dimensions. In other words, this paragraph serves to identify what was written on the bucket, what fixative the specimen was received in, what was removed from the container.
- Second Paragraph - Major Pathologic Finding(s): here you list the major findings. For example, here you would dictate that “a 4.2 x 3.5 x 1.9 cm well-circumscribed, exophytic and ulcerated mass is present in the ascending colon, 9 cm from the proximal margin, 19 cm from the distal margin, and 2.5 cm from the radial margin”. This mass grossly invades the full-thickness muscularis propria, but does not grossly involve the overlying serosa”.
- Third Paragraph - Other Findings: here you list what additional “minor” findings were present. Continuing the example above, you would state that “a 1.2 cm mucosal polyp is present in the transverse colon. Multiple lymph node candidates are present in the surrounding adipose tissue”.
- Fourth Paragraph - Specimen Handling: This is where you indicate how many caps were submitted, whether the specimen was “totally embedded”, or “representative sections”. Next, you would indicate the ink key here. Also, if tissue was frozen or a portion was submitted for flow cytometry, indicate so here.