

Poznań, September 26th, 2016

Letter of support

The Polish Society of Pathologists strongly supports the position of the European Society of Pathology (ESP) on the banning of formalin in EU countries. The enforcement of such a ban would have irreversible consequences for histopathology, which is essential in the diagnosis of many diseases, including malignancies, and subsequently for the qualification of patients for treatment. Formalin is the only fixative which ensures proper preservation of tissues referred for histopathological testing. The entire bases of pathomorphology and classification, as well as the procedures guiding differential diagnosis are based on formalin fixed tissue. Pathology departments use other methods, in addition to classical histology, such as immunohistochemistry and molecular biology, which are essential in defining the status of predictive and prognostic factors used in the further treatment of patients. The above mentioned procedures were validated and have been repeatedly confirmed in numerous studies. The withdrawal of formalin, and the consequent introduction of other (unknown) and non-validated substances, would lead to sub-optimal conditions and an unsatisfactory basis upon which to carry out appropriate pathological diagnosis.

In light of the above, the Polish Society of Pathologists wholeheartedly supports the position of the ESP with regards to the removal of the ban on the use of formalin.



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