FLUID – SYNOVIAL/JOINT

Key Components for Submission

- Stained direct (unconcentrated) preparation

Highly Recommended for Submission

- Visual fluid parameters

Fluid Sample Collection

If only a small amount of fluid is collected, slides may be made directly from needle/syringe. Otherwise, place an aliquot of fluid in an EDTA tube and mix well. If enough fluid remains, place a portion into a sterile tube without additive in case culture is needed.

Visual fluid parameters

- Color: Straw/yellow or blood contaminated?
- Clarity: Clear or cloudy?
- Viscosity: Stringy and viscous or watery?

Direct (unconcentrated) preparation

1. Label the slide(s) with the sample source and patient name.
2. If only a small amount of fluid is aspirated, transfer directly onto the slide from the needle syringe. If fluid was placed into an EDTA tube, gently invert the tube of fluid several times to ensure it is well mixed.
3. Place a drop of fluid near the label end of the slide and use the blood smear technique to spread the fluid, making sure to leave a feathered edge.
   - Alternatively, if the sample is highly viscous, use the squash preparation technique. Place a second slide gently over the sample and without applying pressure, pull the two slides apart in a smooth horizontal motion.
4. Rapidly dry the slide (a hair dryer on cool setting can be used). Do not heat fix.
5. Stain the slide and allow to dry.
6. Apply immersion oil and coverslip (see The Basics).

When scanning make sure that

- Slide is sample side up, pointing toward scanner lens
- Slide lock is engaged
- There are no objects preventing movement of scanner (including no operating centrifuges)