

Autopsy Learning Goal and Objectives

The goal of the autopsy portion of the anatomic pathology clerkships is to provide the student the opportunity to develop skills in the preparation of human postmortem examinations via hands-on training.

By the end of the anatomic pathology clerkships, the student should be able to:

1. Determine whether proper legal authorization for an autopsy procedure has been obtained and the appropriate authorities to contact prior to the autopsy.
2. Explain the necessary procedures to ensure the safety of those in the autopsy suite.
3. Collect pertinent clinical information and data (e.g., from existing medical records, clinical providers, etc.) to reconstruct the deceased patient's medical history.
4. Distill the essential parts of the medical history into likely manner, cause, and mechanism of death.
5. Recognize when it is necessary to seek consultation on a case from the attending pathologist(s).
6. Conduct systematic and thorough external examinations and *in situ* organ inspection.
7. Selecting, preparing, and submitting appropriate gross tissue sections for frozen section analysis and microscopy.
8. Demonstrate common evisceration techniques including the Rokatsansky Method, the Virchow Method, as well as brain and spinal cord removal.
9. Demonstrate competency (e.g., care, skill, efficiency, etc.) at block and organ dissection.
10. Discern abnormalities and/or pathologic changes encountered during the autopsy and dictate or record the findings accurately.
11. Obtain biological specimens such as blood, tissue, and toxicology material for analysis.
12. Indicate when special studies are needed such as non-routine cultures, special evaluation of bones, sinus cavities, and other tissues not routinely evaluated.
13. Demonstrate proficiency at taking gross photographs of pertinent findings.
14. Summarize patient information and autopsy findings clearly and concisely for oral and written presentation.
15. Outline the proper procedure for preparing the body for release and releasing the body to the appropriate mortuary or funeral home representative.
16. Perform other related job functions as needed such as laboratory maintenance, administrative tasks, and assisting with conference preparation.