

# Cooperative Human Tissue Network (CHTN) Normal Tissue Microarray: Version CHTN\_Norm3

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## Purpose:

To provide researchers with a tissue microarray of formalin fixed paraffin embedded samples that includes most of the cell types present in the human body.

## Tissue samples:

Most samples are of normal, non-neoplastic adult tissue obtained from surgical resection specimens, fixed within one hour of removal from the donors. The fixative used is buffered zinc formaldehyde (3.7% formaldehyde) (Z-fix, Anatech, LTD., Battle Creek, MI).

### Exceptions:

Parathyroid - tissue is from a hyperplastic parathyroid gland due to the limiting size and limited availability of normal parathyroid tissue.

Central nervous system tissue (cerebral cortex and white matter) - all obtained from autopsy specimens within 36 hours of death.

## TMA design:

Each tissue type was sampled three times with 1 mm needle cores in the original array design. The CHTN\_Norm3 TMA series was constructed as 4 replicate TMA blocks, designated CHTN\_Norm3A, CHTN\_Norm3B, CHTN\_Norm3C and CHTN\_Norm3D. Each array block is serially sectioned at 4 micron thickness. The histologic sections are placed on charged glass slides (Fisher Plus). At intervals, sections are stained and examined by a pathologist for quality assurance (QA) purposes. The desired tissue type must be present on at least one tissue spot to be scored as adequate. The number of tissue spots in which the desired tissue types resides will vary from section to section.

## Quality assurance procedures:

**Due to the variability inherent to tissue samples and histologic methodology, *most of the tissue microarray sections will not contain all of the tissue spots in the original design.*** The number of tissue spots in which the desired tissue types resides will vary from section to section.

THE TISSUE SAMPLES HAVE BEEN ANONYMIZED, NO FURTHER DATA ON THE DONORS IS AVAILABLE OTHER THAN THAT FOUND IN THE ACCOMPANYING GUIDE SHEETS.

Guide sheets in Microsoft Excel format and H&E stained whole-slide images representative of the array are available on the CHTN TMA website: <http://chn.sites.virginia.edu/>.

If despite our efforts you are missing a target tissue type on your array sections that you desire, please contact the CHTN Mid-Atlantic Division at (434) 924-9879.

**Frequently asked questions:**

Why aren't all there as many tissue spots on my section of the array as are listed on the TMA key?

The key represents the original TMA design. Tissue cores are of various lengths, hence at deeper sections, some cores have been exhausted while others remain. In addition, some tissue spots may be lost during the process of transferring the TMA section to the glass slide.

Why isn't the target tissue type present in the tissue spot?

Although TMA manufacture is guided by a histologic section that represents the surface of the donor tissue, this target tissue may not be uniformly represented in the deeper sections of the tissue. This problem is greatest with small structures (e.g. breast ducts and lobules).

Why doesn't the representative microscopic image of the target tissue exactly match the tissue spot on my TMA?

The representative images have been taken from a single spot from a single QA section from a single array. Four different replicate TMA blocks were made for this series, each of which has different tissue cores. Even the same tissue core at a deeper section would not exactly match a more superficial section due to the variability inherent in tissue architecture.

Can I use antigen retrieval methods (boiling, microwave, pressure cooker, etc) on these sections?

Yes.

Can I perform in situ hybridization on these sections?

Yes.

**Definitions and abbreviations:**

**Donor block:** a tissue paraffin block (see below) that contains tissue of the desired type to be placed into the tissue microarray.

**Histologic section:** a flat sheet of paraffin and embedded tissue cut from a paraffin block on a microtome. The thickness of the section can vary, but a typical thickness is 4 microns (micrometers).

**QA:** quality assurance

**Recipient block:** The blank paraffin block into which tissue cores are inserted to form the tissue microarray.

**Tissue core:** the cylindrical tissue sample removed from the donor block, which is placed in the recipient block.

**TMA:** tissue microarray. A recipient paraffin block into which tissue cores have been inserted in a gridded array.

**Tissue paraffin block:** a sample of tissue that has been fixed in formalin, processed to remove water, then infused with molten paraffin, which is allowed to harden within and around the tissue in a square mold. This is the standard method of preparing tissue for clinical histologic analysis. The paraffin block is subsequently cut on a microtome to produce thin histologic sections which are placed on glass slides. In the manufacture of TMAs, these become the donor blocks.

**Tissue spot:** the tissue sample present on a histologic section of a tissue microarray that corresponds to a tissue core.