Department of Pathology

Laboratory Updates

Cancer Service Expansion:
BIDMC Cordage Park in Plymouth

As part of expanding access to cancer care, two hematology-oncology and infusion facilities are under construction, BIDMC Cordage Park in Plymouth, and a companion site in Quincy. The BIDMC Pathology Department will manage the lab at Cordage Park, which is expected to open in early 2027. Cordage Park will increase infusion chair capacity from the current 22 chairs at BID-Plymouth, to 36 chairs. It will also provide advanced clinical offerings, such as access to clinical trials and a rotation of oncology sub-specialty physicians. Together, these new sites aim to improve access, enhance patient convenience, and deliver comprehensive, leading-edge cancer care within local communities. Below is a recent photo of the Cordage Park lab under construction.

Beth Israel Lahey Health
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
TEACHING HOSPITAL

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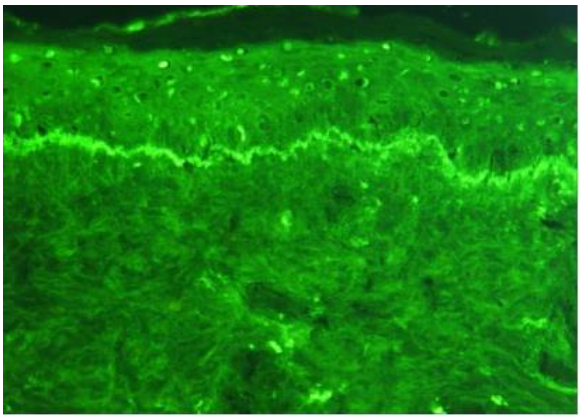
Beyond the Lab Door: Anatomic Pathology

The Anatomic Pathology department has many moving parts. From the cutting room where specimens are accessioned, grossed and prepared to histology where the tissue is processed, embedded, cut and stained, every step requires precision and skill. Our special stains, IHC (immunohistochemistry), EM (electron microscopy), and IF (Immunofluorescense) teams use advanced techniques to detect special markers that are critical for diagnosis. Our Cytology division plays a key role in evaluating cells from body fluids and fine needle aspirations. Our Send Out teams ensure that these specialized tests are complete both in house and at reference labs, while the slide library preserves and organizes cases for future review, teaching and patient care. None of this would function without our administrative staff who help coordinate workflows, manage reports and consults and keep communication flowing. Every role is essential and every detail matters. *Contributed by Allyson Lewis, Anatomic Pathology Technologist*



Photomicrograph of a histological section of human skin prepared for direct immunofluorescence using an anti-IgG antibody. The skin is from a patient with systemic lupus erythematosus and shows IgG deposit at two different places: The first is a band-like deposit along the epidermal basement membrane ("lupus band test" is positive). The second is within the nuclei of the epidermal cells (anti-nuclear antibodies).

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Beyond the Lab Door: Blood Bank

A blood bank is a facility that collects, tests, separates, and stores donated blood and its components (like platelets, plasma, and red cells) to ensure they are safe for medical transfusions. It acts as a crucial supply chain, providing blood for surgeries, emergencies, and chronic diseases while ensuring compatibility and preventing diseases. Below is an interview with a Blood Bank Technologist.

Q: What surprised you about this work?
A day in the life of a blood bank tech can have a wide range of possibilities. One day you could feel like a medical detective, methodically combing through Epic charts and testing a series of antibody identification panels to discover which type of antibody a patient has developed. Another day, you could be running around the lab, preparing blood products for coolers to help a patient through a life-threatening situation. When a trauma case comes through the emergency department and the clinical team activates a massive transfusion protocol, you have to act fast. You never know what kind of day you'll get!

Q: If your department had a mascot what would its name be and what would it look like?
It would be a red drop of blood with a cape, a Blood Bank Superhero who's ready to save lives.

Q: Have you had any other jobs that were useful for this one?
I worked as an ice cream scooper in high school. I took orders and made sure the customer got exactly what they asked for. There are some surprising similarities to blood bank in that way. Now instead of flavors of ice cream, it's types of blood! Completing orders at the ice cream shop prepared me well for my job as an MLS in blood bank because I've developed a strong attention to detail and a warm customer service demeanor.

Department of Pathology
Laboratory Updates

Beyond the Lab Door: Chemistry

Chemistry lab tests, or blood chemistry panels, are routine blood tests used to evaluate overall health by measuring electrolyte levels, organ function (kidneys, liver), and metabolic markers. Common panels include the Basic Metabolic Panel (BMP) and Comprehensive Metabolic Panel (CMP), often requiring fasting for 8–12 hours before a venipuncture. Below is an interview with a Chemistry Technologist.

Q: What surprised you about this work?
How some things never change.

Q: If your department had a mascot what would its name be and what would it look like?
Doc Brown the Mad Scientist [from *Back to the Future*].

Q: Have you had any other jobs that were surprisingly useful for this one?
Analyzers are mostly all the same. If you've learned a few, you can pretty much run any of them.

Chemistry has a new automated analyzer. Cobas Pro: cobas® pro integrated solutions runs qualitative, semiquantitative, and quantitative clinical chemistry and immunochemistry assays as well as ion-selective measurements. *(Image below from the company)*.