

# Immunohistochemistry (IHC) Frequently Asked Questions

We often receive questions about IHC, so we have compiled the following summary for reference.

## Q. Why do you do IHC? Isn't it just upselling?

A. There are many reasons why we might suggest the use of IHC. The use of IHC isn't an upselling technique. It is used to gain more diagnostic information on a case where we have reached the limits of diagnosis using H&E stained histology slides alone. IHC can be used to:

- investigate the cell of origin in poorly differentiated neoplasms;
- gain more information on the prognosis of certain neoplasms (e.g. mast cell tumours and malignant melanomas);
- investigate for the presence of certain infectious organisms (e.g. FIP).

## Q. Does IHC always provide a definitive diagnosis?

A. In most cases we can get a diagnosis with IHC, however as with all diagnostic tests it is not a 100% effective tool. IHC negative results can also help exclude certain conditions. There are many things that can prevent us from making a definitive diagnosis on IHC (e.g. under or over fixation of the sample in formalin). Some neoplasms (e.g. intestinal lymphoma) may have mixed populations of cells or a background of inflammatory cells that prevent a definitive diagnosis. Occasional cases of very poorly differentiated neoplasms exhibit abnormal expression or lack expression of the targeted IHC markers. If a definitive diagnosis cannot be made, your pathologist will provide you with the most likely differentials or may suggest other IHC markers or diagnostic tests.

## Q. How long does it take?

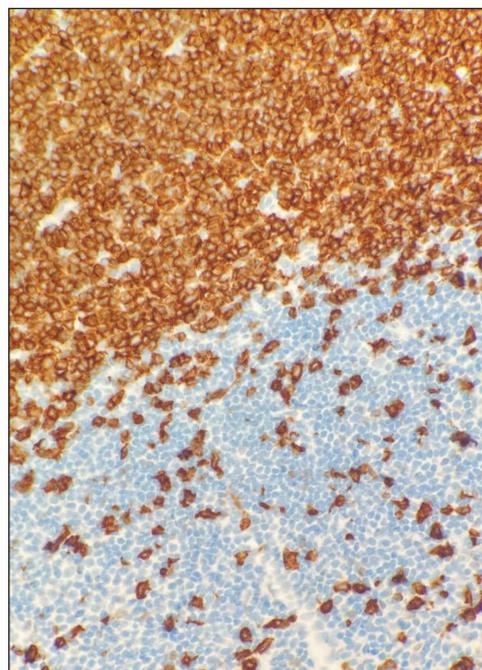
A. This depends on the marker. Usually, you will receive the results within 5 business days of requesting them. However, some markers are not performed in house and can take 10-14 days. Your pathologist will be able to advise you on this.

## Q. Do I need to submit new tissue?

A. Typically you will not need to submit new tissue. As long as the original biopsy samples are large enough, we can use the biopsy we already have for the IHC. Rarely submissions will contain small samples and a pathologist may need to request more tissue samples from you.

## Q. How much does it cost?

A. This depends on the type of marker and number of markers required. Your pathologist will be able to provide you with a quote based on your specific case.



For more information, contact your SVS Pathology Network veterinary pathology laboratory.

SVS - Specialist Veterinary Services Pathology Network



asaplab.com.au  
1300 838 522



vetqml.com.au  
1300 838 765



tmlpath.com.au  
1300 838 765



vetnostics.com.au  
1800 425 116



vetpath.com.au  
08 9317 0777