Biobank Resource

The UVM Cancer Center (UVMCC) Biobank facilitates the collection and distribution of cancer-related patient specimens to UVM investigators funded by the NIH, other national grant awards, or locally distributed research support. The Biobank repository comprises more than 4,000 fresh-frozen surgical tissue samples (stored at -86°C) from a wide range of anatomic sites; in many instances, tumor samples are complemented by paired normal tissues from the same patient. Additionally, a cohort of more than 650 skin cancers has been collected in association with the UVM Medical Center (UVMMC) Mohs Out-Patient Clinic and inspired by the national ‘Skin-of-Steel’ melanoma tissue bank initiative. The time from surgical excision to flash freezing is recorded for all Biobank specimens (graded: Gold <15 minutes; Silver 15-30 minutes; Bronze 31-120 minutes; Test >120 minutes<overnight). Assays are performed annually on a random selection of stored specimens to confirm DNA and RNA quality. The Biobank also collaborates with individual investigators for the customized collection of targeted bio-specimens, such as serum samples from at-risk-for-cancer/cancer patients.

All Biobank specimens are collected and coded in conformity to UVM Institutional Review Board (IRB) and UVMCC Protocol Review and Monitoring Committee (PRMC) regulations. Coded tissue samples along with associated clinical information are made available to individual researchers having obtained UVM IRB and UVMCC PRMC approvals for their specific projects.

Biobank operations are in accordance with NCI Best Practices for Biospecimen Resources and are overseen by UVMMC and UVM Larner College of Medicine (UVM LCOM) clinical and research personnel: a medical director and assistant medical director (anatomic pathologists), the pathologists’ assistants team, a technical director (PhD scientist), and a Biobank full-time senior technologist lab manager. Biobank operations are reviewed biannually by an Advisory Board that includes senior members of the UVMCC, LCOM and UVMMC leadership.