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GUIDELINES FOR MARKING TUMOR MARGINS

- Determine which margin or margins are of greatest concern in terms of incomplete excision. This is usually the deepest border rather than the horizontal margins.
- Gently blot dry the surface to which the ink* will be applied.
- Apply the ink with a small brush or cotton applicator (a nail polish brush is perfect).
- Let it dry for just a minute or two, and then dropped the tissue into the formalin.
- The ink binds to the tissue and stays with the tissue throughout processing, allowing me to judge with 100% certainty what is truly a surgical margin.

If you wish to be really sophisticated, apply the ink very specifically and focally to those areas of greatest concern. I will then specifically examine those regions microscopically, so you are truly "in control" of exactly where I direct my attention. You can even get inks of different colors so you can provide a true color key for different portions of the large mass.

*The ink must be genuine India ink which is a suspension of particles that bind to the tissue. Suitable sources are tattoo parlors and art supply stores. You should practice your technique and confirm the suitability of each particular ink on some non-critical case before you have to use it "for real". Just alert me to the fact that you have applied ink and that you wish me to comment on the results.



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