A segment of nerve approximately 5 cm long will be removed. The nerve will be divided into 3 levels (segments A, B, and C) which will be fixed and processed as described below. In order to prevent autolysis and/or drying artifacts, it is important to place nerve segments in their respective fixatives immediately after their removal in the operating room. Transfix the proximal end of each nerve specimen with a curved needle, to which a 5-0 silk or other suture material is attached. Do not tie the nerve with the suture, but use the 2 loose ends of the suture to hang the specimen in the fixative solution. Hook a small weight to the distal end of segments “A” and “B” (see diagram below). A small bent syringe needle works well as a weight.

Kits
A Nerve Biopsy Kit containing fixatives and buffer is available at an additional fee. Call 800-533-1710 or 507-284-8065 to order.

Shipping Instructions: Send Monday – Thursday Only
Ship segments “A” and “B” refrigerated. Ship segment “C” frozen on dry ice.

Note: Segments “A” and “B” must be shipped separately from segment “C.” If the specimens are sent together, freezing artifact will preclude adequate interpretation.

To assist in interpretation of the specimen and for our permanent records, complete Nerve Biopsy Information (T458), including the tentative clinical diagnosis, name of nerve biopsied, date of biopsy, and indication for nerve biopsy. If not ordering electronically, complete and submit a Pathology Test Request Form (T246) with the specimens. Copies of the neurology clinical notes, electromyogram, and relevant test results should also be included; and the tentative clinical diagnosis should be indicated. Be sure to indicate the address or addresses where results should be sent. Place this information in the shipping box with the specimen. Biopsies received without this information will be held until the appropriate information is obtained.

If the specimen is not sent via the MCL courier service, it should be sent via an overnight express service to:
Mayo Clinic Laboratories
Attn: Peripheral Nerve Biopsy Enclosed
3050 Superior Drive NW
Rochester, MN 55901

To avoid prolonged storage of the specimen in transit, it is best to send it at the beginning of the week rather than near the weekend.

Questions
For questions or assistance with specimen preparation, call the Peripheral Nerve Laboratory at 800-533-1710 or 507-284-8065.