**Purpose**

Alopecia, or hair loss, is generally investigated when occurring on the scalp, but can occur in any site with hair bearing skin. Alopecia is broadly classified into 2 main groups: scarring and non-scarring. Look for these clinical diagnoses to confirm the indication of alopecia: Androgenetic alopecia, alopecia areata (AA), discoid lupus erythematosus (DLE), lichen planopilaris (LPP), frontal fibrosing alopecia (FFA), central centrifugal scarring alopecia (CCSA/CCCA), telogen effluvium, folliculitis decalvans, trichotillomania, etc.

There are usually two specimens submitted, 1 for routine 'vertical' sectioning as is done for standard biopsies, and a second for 'horizontal' or transverse sectioning (see below). If only one specimen is received, a Dermatopathologist should be contacted to determine the appropriate orientation, which will likely be based on the clinician's differential diagnosis.

**NOTE: Save all alopecia biopsies for the designated PA.**

**Procedure**

* Measure the diameter and depth of the skin punch biopsy.
* Describe any lesions, if present.
* Determine sectioning technique(s) to be used.
* The specimen for vertical sectioning should be handled according to standard punch biopsy protocol.
* The specimen for horizontal sectioning should be **bisected transversely slightly (~1 mm) above the dermosubcutaneous junction**.
* Ink the cut surfaces RED.
* Place horizontal specimen in cassette withthe attached **SCALPH** protocol. Place vertical specimen in cassette withthe attached **SCALPV** protocol.

**Sections for Histology**

Complete submission of the specimen, with vertically and horizontally oriented specimens in separate cassettes.

**Sample Dictation**

Labeled "Occipital Scalp", received in formalin in a small container are two 0.4 cm tan skin punch biopsy specimens excised to a depth of 0.5 cm. No lesions are noted. One specimen bisected for vertical sections and one specimen bisected at the mid-dermis for horizontal sections.

Cassette 1A- skin punch biopsy for vertical sections. 2 ns.  
Cassette 1B- skin punch biopsy for horizontal sections. 2 ns.