**Purpose**

Wide local excisions are performed for treatment of known cancer or atypical lesions with close or positive margins. They generally result in an ovoid or elliptical specimen. Excisions may be oriented or un-oriented, and can come with various designations, including excision for ‘microstaging’ or excision of ‘central square\*’; they also may be submitted with sampling for the ‘tissue bank\*\*’. These specimens are handled similarly, with minor variations. **Excisions of melanoma from the head and neck or excisions of dermatofibrosarcoma protruberans (DFSP) are occasional exceptions which may require special handling; contact PA or Dermatopathologist.**

\*Refer to SQUARE EXCISION, if the specimen is designated as a central square on the requisition form.  
\*\*Refer to WLE WITH TISSUE BANK SPECIMEN if tissue bank is indicated.

**Procedure**

**Un-oriented Ellipse**

* Measure the specimen and give its depth of excision.
* Describe the skin color and texture.
* Describe and measure any lesions present, including scars: location (central vs. eccentric and distance from margin), raised, flat, depressed, texture color and border (regular, or irregular).
* Dab specimen dry and apply ink to the deep surface. Use a mordant, acetone on the ink and dab dry again. Alternate the colors of ink from case to case and state in the dictation which color is being used. **Don't use orange ink. Red ink indicates the surface to be embedded toward the cutting surface and will be cut first by the histotechnologist.**
* Amputate the tips and place in the first cassette. It’s important to keep the tips small and away from lesion, especially with ovoid or rounded specimens.
* Serially section the skin ellipse at 2-3 mm intervals.
* Place sections in sequence in the remaining blocks and state how many pieces of tissue are present in each cassette and which cassette(s) contain the lesion.
* A diagram or template of the specimen is optional.

**Sections for Histology**

One cassette with the tips.  
Complete submission of the lesion and surrounding skin (approximately 1.0 cm of uninvolved skin on either side).

**Sample Dictation**

Labeled “Right lower arm", received in formalin in a small container is a 3.5 x 1.5 cm tan skin ellipse excised to a depth of 1.1 cm. The skin is remarkable for a centric pearly pink papule with a well-defined boarder that is 0.5 cm from the nearest margin. The specimen is inked blue and serially sectioned.

**Cassette Summary**

1 A - tips (2 ns)  
1 B - D skin with lesion in cassette 1 C. (3 ns each)