

Finn Pathologists

The Veterinary Laboratory

How Do I Prepare Histological Fixatives?

If you are one of our clients, you will receive regular supplies of sample jars containing a small quantity of concentrated neutral buffered formalin fixative which only requires diluting to the specified mark prior to use.

However, there are always times when you may require extra fixative - either because you have taken an unusual number of samples in a short period of time or because you have a particularly large specimen, such as a brain or a large tumour.

In these circumstances you can successfully make your own 10% formal saline solution using 40% formaldehyde solution, tap water and salt.

40% Formaldehyde	100 ml
Sodium Chloride	9 g
Water	900 ml

This solution will prove perfectly adequate, despite lacking the buffers. Buffering prevents the formation of formalin pigment which occurs, particularly in bloody samples, in acid formaldehyde solutions.

Please remember that, under current Royal Mail regulations, no more than 50ml of liquid formalin should be present within a package.