

# PATHOLOGY FAQ

Sometimes, enthusiastic patients at GCC accidentally overlook a fee that accompanies all top surgery procedures: **pathology**, the testing of body tissue for disease. The purpose of this handout is to address questions you might have about the purpose of pathology and to prepare you to set aside money for this necessary procedure so that you are not caught by surprise.

## WHAT IS PATHOLOGY?

Broadly, pathology is defined as “the science of the causes and effects of disease” and can involve testing bodily fluids or tissue for diagnostic purposes. At the Gender Confirmation Center, pathology is conducted on all FTM/N top surgery patients to check for cancer in chest tissue. The presence of cancer is extremely rare, but for your safety, this is an essential part of surgery.

## CAN I OPT OUT OF PATHOLOGY?

Though you may be frustrated by the added expense of pathology when you do not believe yourself to be at risk for cancer, it is a requirement for surgeries in which breast tissue is removed because it is below the standard of care in medicine to remove breast tissue and not examine it for cancer.

## DO ALL GENDER CONFIRMING SURGERIES REQUIRE PATHOLOGY?

Pathology is required for FTM/N top surgery, but not for other procedures at GCC.

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Pathology costs approximately \$600, independent of the surgeon’s fee. Please note that this is an estimate and that GCC has no control over the cost of pathology.

## WHO CHARGES FOR PATHOLOGY?

Pathology is charged by the lab to which tissue is sent for analysis. Typically it is BioReference, but this can vary.

## CAN INSURANCE COVER THE COST OF PATHOLOGY?

There is no guarantee of this, but patients can provide the lab with their insurance information as an attempt to get coverage.



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